

ECHO IRELAND

Journal of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society

March/April 2005

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The views expressed in Echo Ireland do not necessarily represent the views of the Society or the Editor

Deadline for next edition
June 17th

Mid Ulster Amateur Radio Club
Annual Radio Rally
Sunday 29th May 2005
The Embankment Hotel,
Lurgan, Co. Armagh
(See page 22)

Waterford Rally
16th of October 2005
in the McEniff, Ard Ri Hotel.

2006 Limerick Rally
Sunday 12th March 2006

IRTS AGM 2006
Cork
April 22/23rd 2006



Neil EI3JE and John EI8JA being presented with the Arup Cup by IRTS President Sean Donelan EI4GK at the AGM in Limerick. They were honoured for the tremendous work they have put into developing the repeater network on behalf of the East Cork and South Eastern Groups.

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News Bulletins and Readers

Sunday

Dublin	1100	7.043	SSB	Colm EI3H, Sean EI7CD, Gerry EI8CC
Wicklow	1130	7.068	SSB (as Gaeilge)	Paddy EI7GK

Dublin	1145	145.525	FM	Sean EI5GH, Brendan EI8IB
Dublin	1200	3.650	SSB	As 1100

Tipperary	2030	145.450	FM	Tommy EI7IT, John EI2JB
Dublin	2130	145.525	FM	As 1145

Monday

Cork	2000	145.750	FM	Con EI7DJ, Vincent EI7HN
Limerick	2000	145.725	FM	Brian EI9AL, Tony EI2AW
Louth	2000	145.675		Peter EI4HX, Thos EI2JD
Galway	2000	145.625		Aengus EI4ABB, Richard EI5GC

Tuesday

Waterford	2130	145.650	FM	John EI8JA, Robbie EI8FZB
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IRTS Committee Members

2005/06

President Sean Donelan EI4GK

V/President Fr. Finbarr Buckley EI1CS

Paul Martin EI2CA

John Ketch EI2GN

Pat Fitzpatrick EI2HX

Noel Walsh EI2JC

Brendan De hÓra EI3GV

Joe Fadden EI3IX

Peter Grant EI4HX

Paul O'Kane EI5DI

Sean Nolan EI7CD

Brian Canning EI8IU

Pat O'Connor EI9HX

Club Representatives

Dave Moore EI4BZ (East Cork Group)

Stephen O'Leary EI6JA (Cork Radio Club)

Mark Condon EI6JK (South Dublin R.C.)

St. Maximilian Kolbe SP3RN



St. Maximilian Kolbe was born in Poland on January 8th, 1894. Maximilian grew up and studied to become a Catholic priest.

In his ministry, he was a user of the media to spread the word of God.

He was also a licensed radio amateur, SP3RN, getting his licence in 1939.

St. Maximilian died in Auschwitz, on August 15th 1941.

He volunteered to take the place of another prisoner who was scheduled to be starved to death; a man with a wife and four children.

Fr. Kolbe was elevated to Sainthood by Pope John Paul II in 1982.

He is the unofficial patron saint of Ham Radio operators everywhere.

Silent Key - EI6JO/G3CCC

It is with great regret that I have to report the death of my brother-in-law, Bernard J Moore - EI6JO/G3CCC. Ben was born in Dublin and moved to the North of England in the 1960s and was an active member of first, The Burnley Amateur Radio Club and later, the Thornton Cleveleys Amateur Radio Society. He always maintained strong links with Dublin and the West of Ireland, visiting three or four times each year with a 2m mobile and was present at inaugural meetings of MREN in Bohola. He was a keen QRP constructor and operator and experimented very successfully with HF and VHF antennas at his QTH near Blackpool, Lancashire. Ben was a true 'gentle giant' who had served in the Irish Navy and the Territorial Army in Britain, latterly - before his retirement - using his communications skills in industrial security work. He is survived by his loyal wife Eileen, sons and daughters in the UK, and by 3 sisters in Ireland and the USA. Renowned for his patience and perseverance but confined to hospital for the last seven months, he will be sorely missed and the true spirit of 'gentlemanly amateur radio' will be lessened by his passing.

Peter J Mac Dougall, EI299.

Silent Key Ron Broadbent G3AAJ

Amateur Satellite users will be saddened to hear of the passing of Ron Broadbent MBE, G3AAJ, who died on the morning of April 24th.



He became involved with amateur satellites in the 1970s and by 1978 was secretary of AMSAT-UK, a post he held for 16 years. He was made an Honorary Vice-President of the RSGB in 1994. He was awarded the MBE for his services to amateur radio in 1995.

Ron's working life was spent with Trinity House, attending to the lighthouses and lightships around the British Isles. He retired in 1985 but thereafter worked almost full-time, 12 hours a day, seven days a week and virtually for free for the amateur satellite movement. One of his notable achievements was organising the AMSAT-UK Colloquium for over 10 years.

(Thanks AMSAT-UK)

Silent Key Cyril Forde EI4IL

Cyril Forde EI4IL passed away on March 16th 2005 at the Mater Hospital, Dublin after a long illness bravely borne.

Cyril, a member of the well-known seafaring Forde family was a Radio Officer with Marconi Marine and served on the Irish Sea ferries after many years deepsea.

He was an FCA enthusiast and a very popular and friendly member of the Irish seafaring community.

He will be sadly missed. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

Dan EI3AE

Silent Key Jesse Lawrence EI9GX

We regret to inform you of the death of Jesse Lawrence EI9GX.

Big Jesse died on Monday 14th February 2005, after a long illness.

I'm sure many a person will remember Jess and his big white van at all the rallies, dressed in his denims and shouting greetings to people across the hall. He lived on the Phares Road in Limerick and his passing has cast a great sadness among all his friends both in the amateur radio, computer broadband and indeed with the Chiropractic fraternity.



Jesse was born in Alabama and spent his early career with the US army based in Germany and then with NASA, all in the communications field. Later, he became a Chiropractor and eventually arrived in Ireland in the mid 80's.

Galway took his fancy and he set up practice at his office on the Tuam Road. Jesse had his radio licence from the States and wasted no time in showing his presence at the Galway Radio Experimenters meetings.

Jesse served as Chairman for a number of years and duly placed a caravan outside his house on the Tuam Road with Amateur Radio Club boldly emblazoned. This was certainly responsible for attracting many newcomers into the radio club.

Jesse's house was an open house. One was welcome to drop in anytime, have a coffee and use the radio equipment. He had a fine antenna, ably designed by his good friend Zed EI4HG.

Jesse had a great interest in boating on the Shannon and later in the mid 90's relocated to Portroe in Tipperary. He spoke fluent German and was instrumental in helping many a German sailor on Lough Derg out of a rough spot., mein Gott. Many an evening was spent with Jess on his boat, waxing the night air with a glass of Teachers and discussing new ways of improving radio techniques.

In the last few years Jess developed a great interest in wireless broadband for rural areas and attended many a meeting with the Limerick broadband trying to expand the network.

We will miss this big, friendly man who had a welcome for everyone. No more 9GX to be heard calling from his boat on the Shannon. No more late night coffees.

God Bless you Jesse.

Jesse's ashes were scattered on the Shannon, just outside Williamstown Harbour on Lough Derg, where he spent time helping Germans sailing with Shannon Castle Line.

We extend our sympathy to all his dear friends and especially to Joannes who nursed him in the latter months.

May he rest in peace.

Tom EI3ER

Theory Examination

IRTS is pleased to announce that a tentative date has now been agreed for a Theory Examination. This has been set for June 16th and it will be held at a central Dublin location.

All those who have submitted their names to ComReg will be notified directly of the place and time of the exam.

Those who are interested in sitting this exam and who have not yet notified ComReg of their interest should do so without delay by contacting:

Derek C.O'Reilly,
ComReg,
Abbey Court,
Irish Life Centre,
Lr. Abbey St.,
Dublin 1.
Phone (01) 8049769
email derek.oreilly@comreg.ie

This will be the last time that the traditional essay style Theory Examination will be held in EI.

Future examinations will be in the multiple choice format and will be held on a more regular basis than in recent years.

Details of this new exam system will be published during the coming months.

Dublin Women's Mini Marathon Emergency Communications on June 6th

On Monday June 6th, Terenure College Radio Club, EI2BY will be providing emergency radio coverage for the Dublin women's mini-marathon.

If you would like to take part in this special event, licensed by ComReg as EI2WMM, please contact George Adjaye EI2CPB on Fax/Tel 01-4908546 or 086-2586103 or by-mail to adjayeg@dcu.ie.

Please provide your name, callsign and phone number.

Please note you will be required to provide your own 2 metre radio.



Dundalk Radio Society members on a social night out

James MI5AHG, Mike EI5GG, Jim MI3SBI, Thos EI2JD, Jan EI6IH/GI0VVC, Billy MI3WBL, Seamus GI4SZW and XYL Joan, Kieran EI9DA.

CQ ANNOUNCES ANNUAL "DX MARATHON"

(Visalia, California, April 16th 2005) - *CQ* magazine today announced the revival of the long-dormant **CQ DX Marathon**, last run in 1948.

The new **CQ DX Marathon** will essentially be a year-long DX contest, with stations competing to contact as many different countries ("entities") and CQ Zones of the World as possible over a full-year period, then starting again at zero at the beginning of the next year.

The new **CQ DX Marathon** is part of *CQ*'s broader "Waking Up DXing" program, whose goal is to reinvigorate DXing, or contacting hams in faraway places. The program was outlined for the first time at the International DX Convention in Visalia, California on April 16.

"DXing has always been the heart of ham radio," says *CQ* Editor Rich Moseley, W2VU, "and it continues to be the biggest thing that sets us apart from other forms of electronic communication."

Healthy DXing activity is vital to the long-term health of amateur radio."

Bob Locher, W9KNI, of Idiom Press, provided the inspiration for the new activity and joined in the announcement at Visalia.

"Many active DXers have noticed a drop-off in general DXing activity outside of contests and DXpeditions," notes Locher. "I suggested that *CQ* start up an event that would promote activity all year long, would minimize geographic advantages and provide for simple scoring."

It turns out that the *CQ DX Marathon*, which evolved after 1948 into the *CQ World Wide DX Contest*, was already based on the same concepts."

Scoring will be very simple, consisting of the total number of DX entities and CQ zones contacted over the course of a year. There will be no multipliers and each country and zone will count only once. In the case of a tie, the station whose last qualifying contact came earliest in the year will be the winner.

Complete details and rules for the new **CQ DX Marathon** will be published in the May issue of *CQ* magazine and will be posted on the *CQ* website (www.cq-amateur-radio.com) after the issue is in subscribers' hands. The first running of the event will be in 2006.



From the Editor.....

Welcome to a somewhat later than usual issue of Echo Ireland. Apologies for the delay in getting this to you and especially to the regular contributors whose input may be somewhat dates as a result.

We should be back on schedule for the next issue as holidays will dictate the timing.

It was great to get so many calls asking enquiring about this issue and its non-arrival. We do not often get feedback and it's hard to know if anybody really cares or not.

QSL via bureau?

One of the most frustrating things for an active DXer is to find somebody you work does not use a bureau.

There is usually no problem with DXpedition stations as they always give their QSL information.

The problem arises with the 'ordinary' station and when you consider that probably less than half of all amateurs belong to their national societies, there is a 50/50 chance that you will not get a return card via the bureau.

One simple solution would be for everyone to state on their QRZ or Buckmaster listing their QSLing policy.

For those on the internet, this would only take a minute and those not connected could always ask a friend to update their listing.

This simple act would save a lot of work.

All QSL buros handle large numbers of cards that are not deliverable and they incur a lot of cost returning the cards to the buro of origin.

So, please encourage your non member friends to let everyone know that they do not use the buro.

In a related area, we often get requests, especially from overseas members to indicate in the call book whether an amateur is a member or not. This has been discussed on several occasions at committee and the feeling has always been that this would not be a good idea.

This is a particular problem for members trying to achieve the Worked All EI Counties Award as there is no way of knowing whether your contact station is a society member.

So, what do you do? Do you send a card via the bureau and wait for two years and if no return try the direct route?

I have been reasonably diligent over the years in trying to get EI counties in the log. I managed to get the mixed WEIC Award in 1990 and since then I have been trying to qualify for the award on both CW and on 2 metres.

I have over the years managed to work the required stations on both modes but have failed to get the cards.

I am not alone and regularly hear complaints about the same problem.

Are you one of the guilty parties who ignore both buro and direct requests?

In several instances I have made out a card for the station involved, sent it with a return self addressed envelope, leaving the recipient with the simple task of verifying the QSO and signing the card.

The only option left is to find other stations in the required counties.

The Galway Radio Experimenters Club

Marconi Day 23rd April 2005

Again this year members of The Galway Radio Experimenters Club ran a station to celebrate the birthday of Guglielmo Marconi. EI4IMD was on air for the 24 hour event, working CW, SSB and PSK31.

While conditions on 20m, 17m and 12m were good, the group were disappointed with the high level of QRN on 40 & 80 meters.

It wasn't until late Saturday evening when EI and G stations could be worked. On a brighter note some fabulous contacts were made into the Far East and South America.

The crew taking part were Kieran EI4FFB, Enda EI2II, Tom EI3ER, Des EI5GT and Ronan EI8HJ

Maumturk Walk

Saturday 10th of April was the date of the annual Maumturk Walk; the walk has been running since the 1970's from Meam Cross to Leenane and the Galway Radio Experimenters Club have been supporting the Galway Mountaineering Club for almost half of that time.

With walkers starting off at 0620 that morning the first mountain checkpoint and base station were on air by 0700, 30 minutes ahead of the first people through.

The walk itself is 13 miles across 6 peaks, (a nice stroll on a Saturday) taking an average of 9 to 13 hours to complete. On the day the fastest time was an amazing 6 hours, not easy with the wet and windy weather conditions.

Thankfully this year there were no casualties and everybody got home safely.

Thanks to the following GREC members who provided checkpoint and emergency communications for the day: Kieran EI4FFB, Enda EI2II, Tom EI3ER, Des EI5GT, Ronan EI8HJ, Joe EI3HM, Larry EI9CN, Adrian EI7DMB and Ciaran EI9IH.

Cork City Gaol and Radio Museum

A permanent experimenter radio station with the callsign EI0CRM is set up in the Cork Radio Museum which is located at the Cork City Gaol Heritage Centre in Sundays Well. The station was set up and is being run by Larry O'Sullivan EI7FJB.

Cork City Gaol opened for business in 1824 and was used as a prison until 1923.

When Radio Eireann was expanding in the mid-twenties, the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, a Bandon man, J.J. Walsh decided to set up a broadcast station in Cork.

Broadcasting commenced in 1927 using the callsign 6CK and the studios, transmitter and aerials were all located within the old Cork City Gaol.

National broadcasts were made for nearly two years but due to cutbacks, programming was more or less confined to Sunday nights until the 1950s when the station moved to Union Quay in the City Centre.

The broadcasting studios are fully restored and thanks to Paddy Clarke, Broadcasting Historian and RTE a fine display of radio artefacts from the earliest days are now on permanent display at the Cork Radio Museum.

The museum is open daily and is well worth a visit.

The telephone number is 021-4305022



On The Air

With Anthony O'Rourke EI2HY

Anthony O'Rourke EI2HY,
13 Hazel Road,
Togher, Cork.
ei2hy@eircom.net

Welcome to another On the Air issue.

Solar Activity

We've now passed the Vernal Equinox which occurred at 12:33UTC on Sunday March 20th and sunlight is evenly distributed across both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres at this time and can lead to some nice openings despite the low Sunspot numbers. Of course the effects of the Solar wind on the Earth's magnetosphere increase during the Spring Equinox due to the orientation of Earth's Magnetic Field relative to the Interplanetary Magnetic Field inside the Solar Wind. Material from CME's and shock waves can have their effects enhanced or damped depending on the angle that they arrive at.

As the slide downwards continues some experts have predicted that the next Cycle, number 24, will be the quietest for the last 100 years!

The method used to forecast all this doom and gloom is known as the 'Precursor Method' and has proved to be one of the most successful solar cycle prediction tools around. It works by examining the strength of the magnetic fields that congregate in the polar regions of the Sun a few years before the solar minimum of each solar cycle and relating the strength of those fields to the observed sunspot numbers during the next solar maximum.

Using this method, even this far away from the start of cycle 24, they've predicted that cycle 24 will peak in 2011 with a maximum sunspot number of only 75, with an error of plus or minus 8.

This is the lowest of any cycle since cycle 14 peaked in 1906 with a maximum Sunspot Number of 64!

I received a very interesting letter from Con Hunter EI9V, enclosing some extracts from a NOAA Solar bulletin, amongst the interesting breakdown and analysis of cycle 23 so far was that the period of intense storm activity back in Oct-Nov 2004 produced 18 M-class and 3 X-class Flares from just two Sunspot Groups 691 and 696, out of the 18 M-class 8 were M5 or higher!

Going by this and other analysis of previous cycles the experts are predicting that isolated significant solar storms will continue through the remaining month's of this cycle's decline.

Band Reports

Well it's certainly been an interesting past few weeks! We had the most anticipated DX trip to Peter 1 island cancelled after many delays, we had a 'possible' new one scuppered when the ARRL moved the goalposts but at least the Kerguelen trip came on as expected!

Murphy's Law certainly came to stay with the 3Y0X gang, here's their last official press release:

"I am afraid we have bad news. At 1 AM local time today we learned that our charter vessel, the Cavendish Sea, had not yet sailed from the port of Comodoro Rivadavia. The Cavendish Sea was to sail to Ushuaia to pick up the Dxpedition team and their equipment on Friday, Feb 18th. We were to sail before noon. Because they have delayed their arrival until Sunday, and with a projected Monday departure, we have simply run out time. This latest delay on top of numerous previous delays simply makes it impossible for us to spend a sufficient amount of time on Peter I to justify the Dxpedition this year. So, we have no choice but to postpone the Dxpedition until 2006. We believe it is essential to allow enough time on Peter I to justify the monetary investment made by the team members, our sponsors, individual contributors, DX Clubs, DX Foundations. After having the first vessel, the Antarctic Dream, default on their contract with us, then the helicopter company default on their contract and then after putting everything back together with a new boat and helicopter on this past Tuesday, the team has been on quite an emotional rollercoaster. Our sincerest thanks to everyone for the encouragement and support you offered us during this time".

As mentioned we had the 'possibility' of a new DXCC Entity when a group from the newly formed American Samoa Amateur Radio Association (ASARA) announced a trip to Swains Island, which is a privately owned 3.25 sq km ring of sand and coral island over 350km NNW of Tutuila at co-ordinates Latitude 11.05° S and Longitude 171.05° W.

The KH8SI trip though nearly went the same way as the Peter 1st gang when the original ship chartered had to go into the boatyard for repairs and then disaster

struck the American Samoan islands in the form of Typhoon Olaf and all larger boats were involved with various 'clean-up' operations. As that wasn't bad enough another Typhoon, Percy, struck a direct hit on Swains Island literally a day before the group were due to head to Swains!

Us hams though are nothing if determined and the group managed to get a 'small' 85 ton tuna fishing boat "Tasman Explorer" and arrived on March 5th to quickly get set up and they became QRV on March 6th at 11:00UTC to make just over 9,460 QSO's and their last contact was on 12m at 00:10UTC on March 9th.

Now the reason why Swains Island, apart from being a rare IOTA OC-200, is at the centre of controversy is that in 2000 the ARRL revised it's requirements for what qualifies as a DXCC 'Entity'. Amongst the requirements was for the parent Entity to have IARU membership so hams on Pitcairn island, French Polynesia and New Caledonia formed National Societies and that's how we got Ducie Island, Austral Islands, Marquesas Islands and the Chesterfields as our newest DXCC additions. All good so far, so when new, accurate nautical maps were published and it was discovered that Swains Island lay 359 km from the nearest landmass in American Samoa the excitement rose because one of the other requirements was that the proposed Entity must lie 350 km or more away from the IARU joined parent Entity! I hope you're following this now hi! All seemed straight forward, amateurs on American Samoa only had to form a society, apply for membership of the IARU, get accepted and voila! a new one for us to work.

However, in the IARU constitution Article II 2 states "*there shall be only one Member-Society representing a country or separate territory...*" so with American Samoa not been part of the United States *per se* amateurs formed the ASARA and applied for membership of the IARU at the IARU Region 3 Conference number 12 held in Taipei, Taiwan. This is where, apparently, the ARRL 'moved' the goalposts and in a secret meeting, with no input from the amateur community or DX Advisory Council, changed the criteria for DXCC Entities

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being added by removing the part which states the part of the Parent Entity to be a member of the IARU, so now even if the ASARA joined the IARU, the deletion of this condition means that Swains Island will not become a new DXCC Entity, despite it lying the required distance away from its 'parent Entity', American Samoa!

It all seems, allegedly, to the ARRL refusing to give up being the Member-Society for overseas Territories? Who says there's no politics in Amateur Radio hi!

No doubt as to the DXCC status of this next DX-pedition though as the 12-man team from the Microlite Penguins DXpedition Team fired up from the Kerguelen islands (AF-048) at 06:00UTC on Sunday the 20th of March using the call sign FT5XO. The final team consisted of: AG9A, HB9ASZ, G10NWG, M0DXR, N6MZ, N0TT, SP5XVY, VE3EJ, VK6DXI, W3WL, W7EW and 9V1YC, not sure what happened the other two Irish members Declan and Dermot?

Signals have been a bit on the weak side, nothing at all been heard on **10m** and I just barely got a brief half-hour 'peep' from them on **15m** CW, bands have indeed been that bad unfortunately. The team's antenna farm consisted of: two Battle Creek Special verticals on 40, 80 and 160 meters, ~L verticals on 30 and 40 meters, and mono-band vertical dipoles for 10 through 20 meters.

Cards should go to Gary, VE3XN.

The team went QRT at around 02:00UTC on March 31st and have released a final tally of their QSO's as follows:

CW:	45,687	68%
SSB:	19,903	29%
RTTY:	2,358	3%
EME:	6	
Total:	67,954	

Also gone QRT from near the same region is Jean Paul FT5WJ, who made 2,114 QSO's from Crozet before leaving the island on March 23rd two days earlier than scheduled. One last one from the Antarctica region, Dave VK0MT, is now QRT from Macquarie island since March 29th and has left the island.

If you blinked you would have missed this operation from a nice semi-rare DXCC in the Pacific. Vincent, F5MJV, is currently serving aboard the French Naval vessel "Prairial" which as part of its patrol of French Pacific Territories

stopped off at Clipperton Island (FO) and allowed Vincent to operate a few hours on March 24th as FO0/F5MJV primarily on 14.045 MHz CW using just a dipole and a battery for power.

Gil 4F2KWT, was on from Pag-Asa Island in the Kalayaan Island Group of Palawan Province, Philippines, which counts as part of the Spratly Islands (1S) and IOTA AS-051 using the call DX0K. However, a better led operation scheduled for the end of March had to be cancelled as a suitable ship couldn't be found but Gil managed to get back on from April 6th and is still QRV.

Staying in the Pacific, Dick DJ2EH, was on from Nauru (OC-031) as C21DL and fellow German op Udo DL9HCU, finished up his op from Tokelau as ZK3HC and is currently QRV from Samoa as 5W1VE.

Moving onto Africa and prefix hunters could have gotten a new one by working 9Q6MGK which was Mike, ZR5MGK, operating from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Yves, J20FH kept the keyboarders happy with some RTTY from Djibouti. For you Top band enthusiasts the good news is that Kenyan ops can now operate on **160m** and **30m** again and already Alex 5Z4DZ is up and running with an inverted L, first QSO in the log? FT5XO hi! QSL him to PA1AW.

Husband and wife team Joe G3MRC, and Janet M0JMP are now QRV from Nkhotakota, Malawi as 7Q7BP and 7Q7YL respectively and two Spanish ops were on from Western Sahara as S09A.

Now onto South America and the TO7C group who were active from Salut island (SA-020) off French Guiana finished up with 25,247 QSO's with 126 DXCC's during their operation from March 7th-17th.

Had a brief listen to the CQ WW WPX Contest at the end of March in between work and found conditions generally to be poor enough, not a lot on the higher bands with the exception of hearing OD5WPX pounding in on **10m** on the Sunday morning.

The usual unique and unusual prefixes turned up, TO1T was Guadeloupe, ZL1V from New Zealand, SF50A from Sweden, and 6Y6Y were some of the more 'collectable' prefixes!

For all you prefix hunters a new prefix block, E5A to E5Z, has been allocated to the Cook islands (ZK1) subject to confirmation at the next telecommunications conference so that should be sought after when it appears, but before

the more astute of you start thinking about a possible new one in the form of Palmerston Atoll which lies more than 350km from the South Cooks part, here's a release from the ARRL:

"New Zealand has been issued the E5A-E5Z call sign prefix block for the exclusive use of the Cook Islands. As a result, the Cooks become a political entity for DXCC purposes." Mills says the impact on the DXCC List will be minimal, however. "In reviewing the distances, it appears that the first 'separation' from the South Cooks likely will be Palmerston Island, which is just over 350 km northwest of Rarotonga," he explained. "The remainder of what has been known as the North Cooks are not sufficiently distant from Palmerston to become an additional DXCC entity." Mills says the main effect of the change will be for Palmerston to count for North Cooks instead of South Cooks. The change also may clarify a situation with the North Cooks. "Since the addition of the Manihiki Islands (North Cooks) in January 1959 was not based on a specific distance, Palmerston has counted as South Cooks," he said. "DXCC Rule 5a comes into play now, keeping both North and South Cooks on the list, but moving Palmerston to the North Cooks because it is more than 350 km from the South islands and becomes the first separation." Under the circumstances, Mills said, it might now be appropriate to rename the entity "Palmerston and the North Cooks."

Up and Coming

Well we begin with another spot of bad news and if you need this one for a new Entity, the proposed May trip to Glorioso (FR/G) has had to be postponed as the French Navy had no ships to 'spare' for the trip and have said no to the DXpedition, leader Dany F5CW. He has obviously expressed disappointment and says he hopes to rearrange the trip for October or November this year.

Keep the ears open for a few Special Event calls to be gracing your airwaves throughout the next few weeks, for the month of April listen out for OZ5HCA which is on to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the author Hans Christian Andersen.

9A01IARU will be on air from Murter island (EU-170) in connection with the Central European Region 1 IARU meeting from April 15-17, cards go to 9A6AA.

In Brazil you can expect to work

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

ZW6FSM from Fort Sao Marco from April 17-21.
Juergen, DJ3KR, will be in Taiwan from about April 12 to June 5 and will hope to be active as BX3/DJ3KR.

Moving onto May now and a team of Algerian ops, fresh after their success of activating a new IOTA from Algeria back in June 2003 (7W4HI AF-094) and led once again by OM3CGN, will activate another new one in the form of Sandja island (AF-New) from May 1-5 using the call 7V2SI.

A bit of bad news, there will be no ZS8MI activation this April/May from Prince Edward Island.
For the prefix hunters again, amateur ops in Norway will be able to use LI and LJ prefixes between May 17th and June 7th to celebrate Norwegian Constitution Day.

Rockall Activation

Here's an interesting IOTA trip and maybe a little controversial?
Located at 57°36' 21" N and 13°41'42" W the tiny, isolated island of Rockall sticks up about 65ft above the North Atlantic and measures around 83ft across and 100ft wide and is the last unnumbered IOTA reference for Europe. This June a team from the UK plan an 'assault' on Rockall hoping to actually land on the rock and stay from June 14-21.

The team will include two amateur ops MM0ALM, Dave, and MM0CWJ, Seamus, who plan on using the call MS0IRC/P.

As Rockall is currently disputed territory between Ireland, the UK, Denmark (by means of the Faeroes) and even Iceland staking a claim!

I'm not sure how can this trip be allowed for IOTA status, even though, perhaps a bit 'over keenly', Rockall appears in the IOTA Directories as been belonging to Scotland and has an MM prefix allocated to it, maybe something the IRTS can question the RSGB about? Why not an EI0RI call, an OY0RI call? It is disputed territory and perhaps a bit too 'forward' for the IOTA committee to start issuing a reference number when this trip goes ahead?

As the song says "Rock on Rockall" hi!

Well after a few attempts had to be cancelled the Kure Island team look set to

make it this time with a planned trip scheduled to take place from September 20th to October 8th using the call K7C from Kure Atoll (OC-020).

Operators are expected to include: Bob/ KK6EK, Garry/NI6T, Alan/AD6E, Mike/N6MZ, Ward/N0AX, John/ N7CQQ, Charlie/W6KK, Franz/DJ9ZB, Max/I8NHJ, Alan/K6SRZ, Kathryn/ K6DZL plus two more.

An interesting aspect to this trip will be a 'try out' of a new interactive system that will allow us DXers to 'interact' with the DXpedition by means of your web browser!

Called "DXA" it's an innovative real-time interactive web-satellite-based system, sounds very interesting and with plans to have four stations running simultaneously there'll be plenty to watch online. QSL cards go to N4XP.

An interesting item appeared on the FCC's website recently.

Third party communications is now possible between the United States and the UK, previously only GB Special Event stations could exchange third party messages with US hams and as 'new' additions to the UK normally filter down here to us eventually perhaps one day we also can exchange third party messages with the US?

Finally, here's an interesting 'Ham Spirit' story which was sent into the Daily DX:

"This is Glen, W5IF (ex NF7T); I wanted to send you this to say that with all the hate and discontent that seems to go on at times on our bands. Example, the QRM you spoke about a couple of days ago on the FT5XO operating frequency. The following is an example of the true amateur spirit. While anticipating the expedition to Peter Island, I went to their website and started reading about the operators. Much to my excitement I saw where Erling, LA6VM, was very much involved in the 1987 DXpedition to Peter Island. I knew that I had worked both 3Y1EE and 3Y2GV during that time. However, I never requested a QSL as shortly after the contact I dropped out of Amateur Radio for almost 10 years. Now I am sitting within a couple of countries of being on the Honour Roll and have tried for several years to find out who had the logs. I exchanged e-mails with other members of 2005 team, who were kind enough to

give me a current e-mail address for LA6VM, within 24 hours I had an answer from Erling that he had forwarded the logs "years ago" to Kaare (LA2GV). But I couldn't find a good e-mail address for Kaare, so mailed him a letter pleading and hoping that he would be able to help. Within in two weeks I received an e-mail from Kaare confirming the QSOs and a message that he would mail the cards, no need for postage, just send him my address.

Can you imagine to my surprise when I opened the mail today to find 2 QSL cards direct from Kaare.

Number 325 confirmed today, March 25 2005, for QSO on January 28, 1987".

My thanks go to Con, EI9V, and the Daily DX for some news items, so until next issue, keep listening!

73 de EI2HY

6m Net

A monthly six metre FM net meets on the first Monday of each month on 51.525 MHz FM (vertical polarisation) at 9.00 p.m. local time.

The purpose of this net is to increase activity on the six-metre band.

All are welcome and encouraged to participate.

4m Net

The Monthly 4 Metre Activity Night will take place on the first Tuesday each month from 20.00 to 22.00.

Operators who are equipped for 70 MHz are invited to listen out for and join in any activity on 70.2625 MHz FM.

Mayo Radio Experimenters Network

In the Mayo REN Competition for January and February 2005, 1st place was shared by John McAndrew EI3JM and Jimmy Kelly EI2GCB.

Padraic Baynes EI9JA took second place and 3rd place went to John Browne EI7FAB.

4th was Brendan Minish EI6IZ and Mike Hayes EI2EO was 5th.

The Mayo Radio Experimenters network has announced that classes for instruction in the theory will recommence in September.

Individual Operating Award Winners at the 2005 IRTS A. G. M.

**The Tom
Donellan Cup
CQWW CW**

**Ken McDermott
EI4DW**



**The
IRTS DX Cup
IOTA Single-Op**

**John Barry
EI8IR**



**The Hal
Hodgens Key
IOTA 12 Hour CW**

**Fr. Niall Foley
EI4CF**



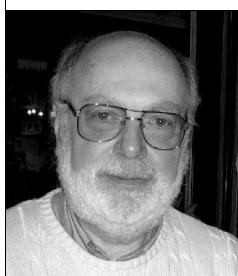
**The EI7IQ
6 Metre Shield
Leading 6m Op.**

**Thos Caffrey
EI2JD**



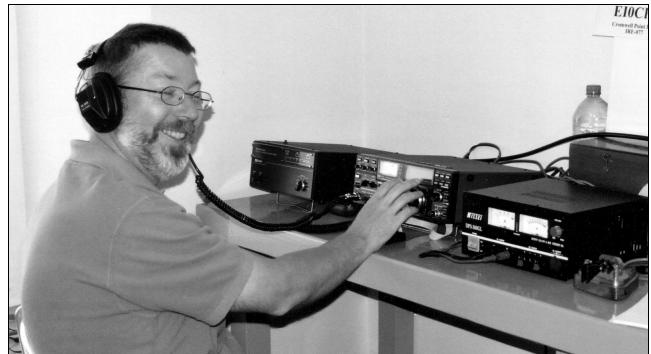
**The EI7IQ
4 Metre Shield
Leading 4m Op.**

**Dave Court
EI3IO**



**The Slievenamon
Shield
70cm FM Activity**

**Hugh O'Donnell
EI2HI**



Ron Hahn EI2JP

QRS CW Net

A weekly QRS CW Net is held on Mondays evenings on 3.567MHz at 1900 hours. EI2JP is net control.

The purpose of this net is to promote a minimum CW proficiency by conducting an informal net combining code practice and on-the-air participation.

The format of the net is a brief paragraph or two for warm-up, followed by check-ins, and wrapped up with another paragraph or two for additional practice. The practice sessions will be sent at 6 words per minute. All participants, regardless of ability, are encouraged to join in. The net will resume on May 30th after a break for Ron's trip to Dayton

Further information can be obtained from EI2JP or from the Kerry Amateur Radio Group's web site at www.kerry.com

Ron Hahn EI2JP
Tel. 064-36842 (before 9pm pls) Mob. 086-600-5499

Focus on **Jim MonaghanN7HKO**

Jim, N7HKO/EI4HD is well known to many EI operators as a regular on the now famous Irish Hour held on Sunday afternoons on 21.317 MHz. Not many will be aware that Jim was the person who started the net back in 1989.

Jim has been in the U.S.A. for fifty two years, having left Kilbeggan in Co. Westmeath in 1953.

He is now retired from the transportation business and will celebrate being a ham for fifty years next April. He keeps busy with volunteer work in the communications area for the Western Washington Medical Services.

He belongs to the Renton Radio Club, located twenty five miles North of his QTH and is a regular attendee at their monthly meetings. This is a large club of well over 200 members.

He is also a Volunteer Examiner for the past four years.

Jim lives in a town called Puyallup about eight miles south east of Tacoma, Washington and has raised three sons and two daughters and now has nine grand daughters and three grandsons to keep him busy.

He hopes to visit Ireland again in the near future having been last here in 1989.

Photo Diane Dinkelman KB7DNE



International Lighthouse/ Lightship Weekend

The 2004 International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend took place over the weekend 21/22 August 2004 when over 380 lighthouse stations were established in 52 countries.

A full list of stations with their details can be found at http://illw.net/2004_list.htm.

2005

This year the event will run from 0001 UTC on the 20th of August until 2359 UTC on the 21st of August 2005.

Guidelines for the International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend 2005 can be found at <http://illw.net/index.html>

So come and join the fun and let us have over 400 stations at lighthouses or lightships.

CQ Introduces the "CQ DX Field Award"

CQ Amateur Radio magazine have announced the introduction of a new operating award, the "CQ DX Field Award," recognizing achievements in contacting at least 50 of the world's 324 10x20-degree "grid fields.

" This is the first of three new programs to be announced by CQ over the next three months with the goal of revitalizing ham radio's core activity of DXing, or contacting stations in faraway places.

The CQ DX Field Award is based on the Maidenhead Grid Locator system, already popular among VHF DXers and contesters, in which the world is divided, based on latitude and longitude, into 324 10x20 degree "fields" and each field is broken up into 100 1x2 degree "grid squares" or "locators.

" CQ DX Awards Manager Billy Williams, N4UF, has calculated that there are 177 fields with which the active ham stands a pretty good chance of making a contact, noting that many fields are in Antarctica, the Arctic or wholly within oceans.

Williams estimates that a ham who has achieved the basic levels of the traditional CQ DX Award program and/or the ARRL's DXCC program - both of which require confirmed contact with at least 100 DX "entities" - will probably also qualify for the basic CQ DX Field Award level of 50 confirmed fields.

Endorsements will be issued for each additional 50 fields up to 150, then in increments of 25 fields to a final level of all 324 fields.

Contacts made on or after January 1, 1980 (the year in which the grid system was adopted for amateur radio use) will count toward the new award.

Complete details and rules were published in the April 2005 issue of CQ magazine and have been posted on the magazine's website at <<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>>.

In addition, Williams has developed an online cross-reference guide for converting countries to fields. It will be accessible at <<http://home.earthlink.net/~bfwillia/gridfieldsx.html>>.

South Eastern Amateur Radio Group Annual General Meeting - February 2005

The Annual General Meeting of the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group took place on February the 23rd last.

The meeting was well attended and the committee reports and election of officers was followed by a discussion.

The club meets at 8.00 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month in the Roanmore Social and Sports Club, Cleaboy Road, Waterford.

For more information visit <http://www.searg.com> or e-mail info@searg.com.

Picture below:

Seated L to R: Mark Wall EI7IS, Secretary: Eddie Steadman EI9DJB, Officer: Michael Hoban EI5DCB, Treasurer:

Standing L to R: John McCarthy EI8JA, Chairperson: Nicholas Madigan EI3JB, Officer, Eoin Doherty EI7FXB, Vice-Chairperson: John Ronan EI7IG, Officer. Not in photograph, Egidio Giani EI9EQ Officer.

Photo by Aidan EI2CTB.



Cork ATV Group

The annual general meeting of the Cork ATV Group was held at Wilton Park House on Monday March 7th and the following were elected to office:

Chairman Aedan EI3EG,
Secretary Fr. Finbarr EI1CS
Treasurer Dave EI4BZ.

Committee members are Jim Barry EI8GS, John Kelleher EI8HS, Stephen O'Leary EI6JA, Jeremy Sheehan EI5GM and Vincent Neff EI7HN.

Subscriptions were set at €20.00 and should be paid to treasurer EI4BZ.

The repeater, located southwest of Cork City is fully functioning with a four

screen split using a single Alfred slot antenna with a diplexer filter by ID-Elektronik of Germany.

It is running 18 watts on 1300 MHz and the input is on 1245 MHz.

Work is underway to forward link to both North and East Cork giving the potential of linking with both Limerick and Waterford.

It is also hoped in the near future to live stream other ATV repeaters.

The repeater is fully remote controlled from the QTH of EI3EG by means of a wireless LAN link.

Enquiries to Aedan EI3EG or to any committee member.

Committee Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society

Greenhills Hotel, Limerick

Sunday 13th March 2005

Committee Meetings

Six Committee meetings were held during the year.

Five meetings were held in the Montague Hotel in Portlaoise.

One meeting was hosted by the Cork Radio Club at their premises in Bishopstown on the eve of the Blarney Rally in September.

Although primarily concerned with long-term policy issues, committee meetings are also valuable to ensure that on-going difficulties and opportunities are aired in an open and supportive atmosphere.

The committee would like to remind clubs of their entitlement to send representatives or observers to these meetings.

Membership

The total membership of IRTS at the end of December 2004 was 985 compared to 1005 last year.

It is unfortunate perhaps that we have not sustained the record level of last year but the level of membership remains relatively consistent with previous years.

A direct debit facility is available which is a convenient way to renew.

ComReg

The Commission for Telecommunications Regulation (ComReg) is the body responsible for the regulation of the Experimenter Service in Ireland. The Society maintains continuous contact with ComReg on a variety of matters. In addition to regularly scheduled formal meetings, phone, email and written communications are used to resolve those issues that arise on a day-to-day basis.

The major issue to arise during the past year concerned the Experimenters Theory Examination. Since the Marine Radio Surveyors withdrew from the running of this examination in 2003, no regularly scheduled examinations have been held. At the urging of IRTS, ComReg agreed to hold an examination in February 2004 and this was conducted with the assistance of IRTS.

The Society approached ComReg again in the summer and autumn of 2004 with requests to schedule another Examination. The Regulator refused these requests on the grounds that the Theory Examination was being outsourced and it was a matter for whatever organisation was successful in the outsourcing competition to hold future examinations. The preparations for the outsourcing process took a very long time and it was only on February 15th this year that the newspaper notice inviting tenders was published.

The Society has prepared a tender document with a view to applying for the exclusive right to run the Theory Examination.

However, it needs to be appreciated that the terms under which ComReg has specified the outsourcing will take place are draconian in the extreme and should such an application be successful, the Society would be faced with significant financial, administrative and legal risks.

It is the view of the Committee that, above all, the interests of

the Society and its members must be protected and before submitting a tender, the Committee is undertaking a thorough review of all aspects of the process.

Data Protection Act

For many years, the Society's Callbook, together with the EI entries in the RSGB and other International Callbooks has been prepared by the Society's officers in conjunction with the Regulator of the day.

Morse

Following the decision of WRC 2003 to eliminate the mandatory Morse code requirement for access to the HF bands and the fact that there is still no common CEPT position on the Morse Requirement, ComReg still require experimenters to pass the 5 wpm Morse test in order to issue a CEPT class 1 license and 2 letter call sign.

A small number of candidates still undergo this test.

International Amateur Radio Union

Because it uses an international natural resource—the radio spectrum—Amateur Radio must organize nationally and internationally for better mutual use of the radio spectrum among radio amateurs throughout the world, to develop Amateur Radio worldwide, and to successfully interact with the agencies responsible for regulating and allocating radio frequencies. At international level, national societies throughout the world work together for the international good of Amateur Radio under the auspices of a representative democracy, the International Amateur Radio Union – IARU.

The Society is happy to report that, following requests by the Society, ComReg agreed to extend the 40m band to 7.2 MHz and implement other changes agreed at WRTC 2003.

The Society will be represented at the Region 1 General conference in September of this year.

EURADIO

To coincide with the Accession of 10 new member states to the European Union on 1st May 2004, IRTS activated 11 Special Event Stations. Each station had a prefix of EI25, ten stations were situated in towns twinned with each of the new member states and a further station was located in Dublin..

A special Certificate and QSL card has been printed and over 70 certificates have been issued to date.

The committee recognises the good work done by clubs and individuals at local level, particularly as the lead time to the event was quite short.

Amateur Radio Emergency Network

AREN training and preparation is continuing on an ongoing basis where a group of very dedicated experimenters, under the leadership of co-ordinator John EI2GN, have taken it upon themselves to prepare in the best possible way in order to be able to provide and assist with emergency communications in times of disaster.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

This included the production of a training manual which is an essential element in placing AREN operations on a sound footing.

AREN nets and exercises are held regularly all which will ensure a pool of radio operators proficient in emergency communications will be available.

Regular contacts are maintained with the Regulatory authorities and the Professional Emergency Services.

It is gratifying to know that EI AREN members were available and able to assist directly with communications during the recent South East Asia tsunami disaster.

Clubs

There are 35 club members of IRTS. This is only two less than the figure at the end of 2000. Although there are no figures to support the view that the majority of clubs are in a very weak state, the general view is that this is indeed the case. A resurgence in club membership and activity would be a very welcome development but, can anybody suggest how this might be brought about?

With modern housing developments, many experimenters live in built-up areas and are severely limited in their choice of aerials.

Club activities such as field days are an obvious way to experience HF and VHF operation.

The President and the Committee would encourage affiliated clubs to exercise their entitlement to send a representative or an observer to meetings of the Committee of the Society.

It is a way for clubs to keep in touch with Society affairs as well as to make a contribution to the running of the Society

scale a wide selection and keen prices are available.

Because of this we have been running down our book sales for the last while. We will continue to have a presence at all rallies in the future but we intend only to sell IRTS specific items such as log-books, pin badges, ties and maps etc and to provide a contact point for membership applications and renewals.

Web-Site

Leslie Long EI4DU continues to maintain the Web-site, which contains information about the Society and about Amateur Radio generally.

The membership application form available on this site has been an important source of new members for the IRTS.

Independently of the Web-site, the Society maintains an on-line Call Book at <http://www.qsl.net/ei7gy/eicalls.html> This listing is updated regularly. Members are requested to assist Joe EI7GY by informing him of any changes to their details.

QSL Service

Tony Baldwin EI8JK is our Outgoing QSL manager and the committee wishes to thank Tony for taking on this important task

We would ask members to follow the rules in the handbook regarding the sorting of cards in order to assist Tony in his work.

Members continue to mail outgoing cards to P.O. Box 462. This incurs additional cost and delays in getting the cards to Tony in West Cork.

Please mail your cards directly to EI8JK.

On the incoming side, readers of Mike EI2CL's column in Echo Ireland will be aware of the volumes of cards arriving from abroad to the IRTS. After an initial sort by Mike the cards are passed to Pat EI2HX who distributes the cards to the sub-managers.

Again our thanks to Mike, Pat and all the incoming buro managers.

Radio News

The radio news is broadcast weekly nationally on HF and on VHF by clubs from many locations on a weekly basis.

Judging by the call-in with reports these broadcasts continue to be very popular with experimenters.

It can be a difficult job producing an interesting script every week.

We ask that members, both individuals and clubs, submit items for the news as often as possible.

You may come across interesting items in magazines, the web or other media which the editor may not be aware of which would be of interest to the broader membership, so be sure to pass them on.

Awards

The Society's Worked EI Counties Award seems to be difficult to obtain, as no new awards were made during the past year.

The Worked All Ireland scheme has many enthusiastic supporters but mobile activity has declined in recent times.

On the international front congratulations are extended to Frank EI2GS on achieving the very notable 'Full House' of all 353

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

DXCC entities.

Alan EI3EBB became only the 3rd EI station to be awarded DXCC on 6 m

The Society's Cups and trophies which are awarded both for contests and service to amateur radio will be presented later in the AGM

VHF

The mention of VHF usually brings to mind VHF and UHF repeaters.

Co-operation between the South East Group and the East Cork group saw the provision during 2004 of a new interlinked repeater chain with enhanced coverage all the way from Cork and the South East and up through the Midlands for mobile stations and further afield for fixed.

Activity on repeaters seems to go in cycles and sometimes they can appear very quiet. Experiments are ongoing with IRLP and Echolink and while the interlinking of amateur radio and the internet by these means has both supporters and detractors, many will agree it is still another interesting aspect of the hobby.

Other VHF band and modes continue to have their enthusiasts in areas such as digital modes, satellite and VHF DX. The high quality of logs received recently for the six meter shield bears this out.

Contests

The society directly organizes 5 contests each year – CW, SSB and VHF/UHF Field Days and Spring and Autumn 2m Counties Contests.

While the standard of entries to the contests were very high the number of entries seem to be down a little on previous years. This was noticeable in the Counties contest; while it remains popular it deserves even more support.

As the next edition is almost upon us perhaps we should all resolve to take part for the couple of hours on Easter Monday afternoon.

The Counties Contest does not require an elaborate station to take part and surely almost every licensed experimenter has 2 metre equipment.

In an effort to increase interest in the Field Days, the committee decided to run the CW and SSB field days in a central location. While this was reasonably successful in 2003, last years CW one had to be cancelled and there was a reduction in the number of stations in the SSB Field Day.

Our thanks to Fr. Niall Foley EI4CF for organising Garbally College in Ballinasloe as the venue.

Thanks to all who took part in the past year and took the time to submit an entry.

Members Input

The Society could not operate without the involvement of its members. In the first instance, they help to maintain it financially through their membership subscriptions. Secondly, the many hours of unpaid and often unseen effort undertaken by the band of volunteer helpers ensures that the day to day affairs of the Society run smoothly.

The Committee expresses its thanks to all those who contributed in any way to the running of the Society during the year and looks forward to a continuing contribution in 2005.

Field Day Winners 2004

CW Open Section

East Cork Group EI7M/P

CW Restricted Section

Shannon Basin Radio Club EI2SBC/P

SSB Open Section

Southern Region Networks EI9E/P

SSB Restricted Section

Shannon Basin Radio Club EI2SBC/P

VHF/UHF Open Section

East Cork Radio Group EI7M/P

VHF/UHF Restricted Section

Dundalk A.R.S. EI2DAR/P

IOTA Contest 2004

IRTS IOTA Trophy

East Cork/Bristol Groups EJ2MT

IRTS DX Cup

John Barry EI8IR

Hal Hodgens Key

Fr. Niall Foley EI4CF

CQWWW CW 2003

Tom Donelan Cup

Ken McDermott EI4DW



Joe Ryan EI7GY

Well known portable contest operator Joe EI7GY pictured operating in the recent Spring 2m Counties Contest.

Irish Radio Transmitters Society

Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2004

Presented to the Annual General Meeting at the Greenhills Hotel, Limerick on 13th March 2005.

I have pleasure in presenting the accounts for the year 2004 for the approval of the meeting

The Society's accounts show a deficit of €98.00 for the year and this amount has been subtracted from the General Reserve. The amount of the General Reserve is now in excess of €8,000. The Society, for an organisation of its size, remains in a strong position financially.

The general rise in the cost of living is reflected as an increase in a number of areas of the accounts such as printing, postage and room rent. It is reasonable to assume that this pattern will continue for next year. We also decided to engage a firm to distribute our Newsletters.

Our Society has always had the objective of providing its members with the highest level of service for the lowest practicable subscription. I am pleased to say that this situation has not changed. It can only be maintained by members of the Society carrying out the work on a voluntary basis. An increase in the number of members who would be willing to undertake work on behalf of the Society would be appreciated.

The annual subscription is the life blood of the Society and I would like to thank all those who paid their subscriptions, in particular, all who pay the subscription on receipt of the first advice. These prompt replies reduce the cost of stationery and postage, as subsequent reminders are not required. One further way to help decrease our overheads and the work required for collection would be the greater use of the Direct Debit system. Again I appeal to you to consider paying by this method, it has a big advantage both for the Society and the participant. I have the appropriate application forms available at any time.

The pursuit of subscriptions and issue of news letters would be very difficult were it not for the work of Joe Ryan who developed and continues to maintain the database of the membership, many thanks Joe. My thanks also goes to our two auditors who keep me in line and look after all our interests.

Signed:

Brendan De hÓra EI3GV

Hon. Treasurer.

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2004

	2003	2003	2004	2004
Fixed Assets				
Equipment		Nil		Nil
Prize Bonds		£89		€89
Shares – Irish Life and Permanent plc.		£754		€754
Current Assets				
Stock for Re-sale	£4,566		€3,688	
Cash on Deposit	€24,414		€29,664	
Cash at Bank	€8,764		€4,664	
		€7,744		€8,016
Surplus of Assets over Liabilities		€8,587		€8,859
		=====		=====
Represented by:				
General Reserve		€4,806		€33,808
IARU Conference Reserve		€3,781		€5,021
		=====		=====
		€8,587		€38,859
		=====		=====

Dublin ARC Disbursements Account

Balance remaining for disbursement at 31 st December 2003	€243	€243
		=====

Signed

Brendan De hÓra EI3GV,
Hon. Treasurer

Irish Radio Transmitters Society

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year to 31st December 2004

INCOME	2003	2004
Subscriptions	€20,711	€19,800
Donations	€105	€17
Advertising	€20	€70
Book Sales	€618	(€126)
Investment Income	€177	€89
Morse Tests	€51	€102
WEIC, Euro Certs & New Certs	€20	€181
Sundry Income	€117	€8
	-----	-----
	€22,320	€20,471
	=====	=====
EXPENDITURE		
Newsletter Printing	€6,504	€7,060
Newsletter Postage	€3,475	€5,100
Postage & Telephone	€843	€776
Yearbook Printing	0	0
Radio News	0	0
QSL Service Outwards	€700	€1,000
QSL Service Inwards	€560	€410
Stationery & Admin.	€911	€1,038
P.O. Box Rental	€220	€220
Insurance	€179	€655
Committee Meetings	€111	€575
AGM Costs	€64	€47
IARU Dues	€1042	€1,081
Licence Fees	€10	0
Depreciation	0	0
Conference Reserve	€1,270	€1,270
Bank Charges	€71	€294
Trophies	€31	€252
Website Costs	€151	€1,001
Misc.	€94	€66
Unpaid Subs	€159	€25
	-----	-----
	€18,694	€21,469
	=====	=====
Surplus/Deficit for Year	€3,626	(€98)
	=====	=====

Auditors Report

We, the undersigned, acting as Honorary Auditors of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society, have compared the foregoing Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet and Notes thereon, with the books and vouchers of the Society and certify that they are correct and in accordance with them.

Signed:

Thomas McLoughlin EI400

Ger Gervin EI8CC

Irish Radio Transmitters Society

Notes on, and forming part of the Accounts for the Year ended 31st December 2004

1. Income

Subscriptions and Income received during the year were credited to the Income and Expenditure Account. Subscriptions covering any period after 31st December 2003 were not treated as prepaid. No provision was made for Subscriptions in arrears.

2. General Reserve

Balance as at 1 st January 2004	€4,806
Subtract defecit for the year 2004	€98

Balance as at 31 st December 2004	€3,808
	=====

3. Equipment

All Equipment in the possession of the Society has been fully depreciated.

4. Shares – Irish Life and Permanent plc

Shares in Irish Life and Permanent plc are shown in the Balance Sheet at the issue price (€2.29 per share). The Market Value of these shares on 22nd January 2005 was €4,719 (330 shares @ €14.30)

5. Cash on Deposit

	2003	2004
Irish Life and Permanent plc.	€24,414	€29,664

6. IARU Conference Reserve

	2003	2004
Balance on 1 st January	€3,781	€3,781
Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account	€1,270	-----
Less Expenses 2003	Nil	-----
Balance on 31 st December 2004	€5,051	-----

Irish Radio Transmitters Society AGM 2005

Hosted by Limerick Radio Club

at the Greenhills Hotel, Limerick on March 12/13th

The 73rd Annual General Meeting of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society took place on the 13th of March last in the Greenhills Hotel in Limerick.

The weekend activity was host by Limerick Radio Club for the second year in succession and followed the usual format with the dinner on Saturday night and the trade show and meeting on the Sunday.

Saturday night's dinner was very well attended and most areas of the country were represented.

A feature of the dinner was the power-point presentation by Richard EI8JE which featured photos of EI activity during the past year.

The rally on Sunday was again a great success with Icom, Yaesu, Linear Amp and BHI all making the trip across from the UK.

All the EI regulars were also present including Long Communications, South East Communications, Cellcom, Waterford Communication Centre and Sean Martin.

AGM

IRTS President Sean Donelan EI4GK welcomed over seventy members to the Annual General Meeting held in a semi-darkened room due to a fault on the lighting system in the hotel.

In his address, Sean thanked all those whose work keeps the Society ticking over and remarked on the fact that this year, for the first time in a while, there were more nominations for committee

positions than the required number. He asked for more volunteers and invited members, especially club representatives to attend committee meetings and see what was going on.

He also announced that difficulties with the release of callsign information by ComReg due to the data protection act had been resolved on the Friday before the meeting.

The main issue of concern to members was the lack of a theory examination. As usual the presentation of trophies was a major part of the event and details of recipients can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Among the attendance was RSGB president Jeff Smith M10AEX.



Paul Kirkby EI6FE

Chairman of Limerick Radio Club

Paul extends his thanks to all who supported the events and to all who helped with the work over the weekend.



Richard EI8JE, Tony EI2AW and Alan EI8EM on duty at the Limerick Rally



Presentation of the Yaesu sponsored FT 817ND raffle prize at the Limerick Rally



Paul EI2CA being presented with his ICOM sponsored raffle prize, an IC-R5 at the Limerick Rally



Presentation of the BHI sponsored prize



Tony Liddy EI9IL (left) being presented with his prize of a meal voucher by Thos EI2JD on behalf of the Greenhills Hotel.



Joe Ryan EI7GY being presented with his prize sponsored by ICOM UK.



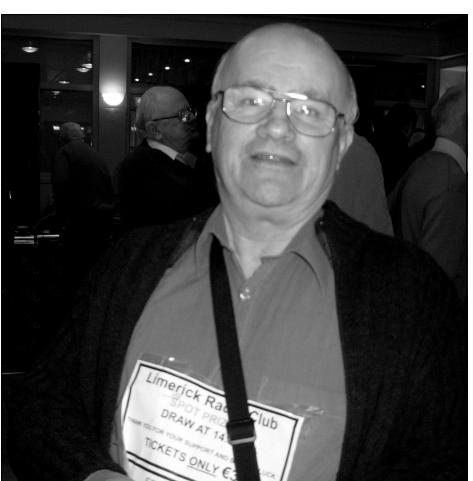
Brendan EI3GV being presented with his prize by ?? of Linear Amp UK.



Sean Cooney EI5GH being presented with his prize sponsored by BHI Ltd.



Marty and Icom



Paddy EI8GY who with XYL Mary worked hard throughout the rally selling raffle tickets.

Thanks from LRC

Limerick Radio Club would like to thank all who supported the events of the weekend, especially the traders who made the event such a success. Next years rally will be held on Sunday March 12th again at the Greenhills Hotel which has proved to be an outstanding venue.

Sean Nolan EI7CD Hon. Vice-President



Sean Nolan EI7CD has been made an Honorary Vice-President of IRTS in appreciation of his long and distinguished service to the hobby in EI.

He is a past-president of the Society having served from 1977 to 1979 and he has just completed a three year term as vice-president. He also served as secretary for several years.

Most readers will know Sean as the newsreader on Sundays, usually on the 80m bulletin at 12 noon.

He is an active 6m operator and is also a member of the Dalkey Island Contest Group.

He is a very valuable member of the IRTS committee and has played a major part in preparing the expression of interest to ComReg for the holding of the theory examinations by the Society. He is the society's representative to the International Amateur Radio Union.



Ailsa of Yaesu UK with Bernie O'Sullivan EI6AX enjoying the IRTS annual dinner.

Bernie was the winner of a Yaesu VX2 at the dinner raffle.



Emergency Communications

With John Ketch EI2GN

Training

A training net was held over the late winter and early spring which consisted of an on air discussion of Emercomms issues covered in the amateur radio and general press, and on air reading of the training manual. This has assisted in the preparation of a core group of operators who are ready for deployment if required in an emergency situation. If there is a demand from other members for this net to deal the same modules in the autumn it will re-run. In any event the net will reconvene in the autumn to deal with the next level of training for members.



Conor EI4JN and John EI2GN at the emergency exercise held on the Cork Waterford border on the Youghal by-pass on the N25

Emergency Planning Exercise

An Emergency Planning office exercise was held in early April on the Cork Waterford border on the N25 adjacent to Youghal, Co. Cork.

This was a training exercise for first responders and it was run on a closed section of roadway in order to test the readiness of the agencies and to provide them with an opportunity to test their individual plans.

The location at a county boundary was chosen to provide services from two administrations to work together.

The simulation involved an accident between a bus and a chemical truck during which injuries and death occurred. A number of cars were used including one that was placed in the tidal estuary.

Personnel from the Gardai at Midleton responded to the 999 call and sealed and controlled the area while the ambulance and fire service dealt with the incident. Decontamination units were deployed and used in order to make the area safe for rescue personnel to operate while divers recovered bodies from the car that had left the carriage-way. Ambulances from the health boards and Red Cross were used to ferry casualties to the coastguard search and rescue helicopter that in turn transferred them to hospital

The Emercomms National Coordinator accepted an invitation to attend as an observer along with the Munster Coordinator. AREN members, John Ronan, EI7IG and John Costello, EI9ESB also attended.

The debriefing session held immediately after the event gave rise to an extremely useful discussion on each aspect of the exercise, ranging from the manner in which the initial call was handled by the telephone operator to how the various agencies deployed and performed on the ground. An informed discussion on com-

munications formed a significant part of the de-brief to which the IRTS EmerComms coordinator contributed.

The Tampere Convention

Plans are advancing for the first Global Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Conference to be held in Finland in June 2005.

The event will take place in Tampere, a town with a long tradition in emergency telecommunications and known throughout the world through the Tampere Convention,

the first international treaty on the provision of telecommunications in support of disaster relief. The conference is open to everyone with an interest in its topic; we expect in particular representatives from amateur radio societies, but also from national and international humanitarian institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations, national telecommunication administrations, as well as the private and academic sector.

The Conference is also expected to prepare and adopt a statement to another event in 2005: The seconds phase of the *World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS)*, scheduled to take place in Tunis, Tunisia, in November of the same year.

This summit will be a unique opportunity, to give visibility to the contributions the Amateur Radio Service can provide through its networks as well as through its skilled operators. The IRTS has decided to send a delegate to this conference and a full report will be published in Echo Ireland.

APRS

Reliable digital modes play a significant part in the provision of a useful voluntary emergency communications service. One of these modes is APRS, Automatic Position Reporting System that allows moving stations to be traced on a PC. The Tipperary Amateur Radio Group recently used this to good effect during the Glen of Aherlow Walking Festival when radio amateurs carrying APRS equipment accompanied walkers.

An article on the use of APRS by the Tipperary Group appears in this Issue of Echo Ireland.

Clubs

The AREN group has received invitation from the South East Radio Group and from Limerick Radio Club to do a presentation on Voluntary Emergency Communications.

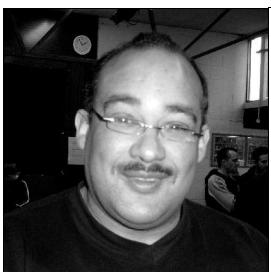
Other clubs and societies who wish to avail of this service should contact the coordinator who will be happy to accommodate requests.



John EI9ESB, an observer at the emergency exercise on the Youghal bypass

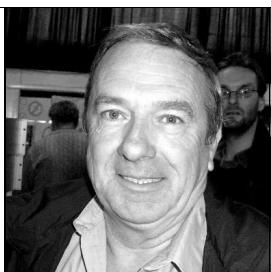


William EI1DK



George EI2CPB

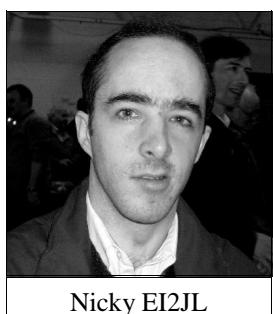
**Pictures from the
Coolmine Rally**
Feb. 6th 2005
Coolmine
Community School



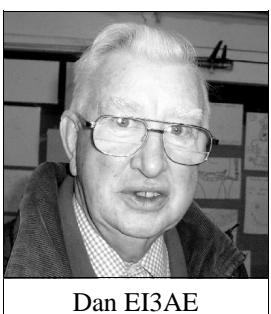
Tony EI3HA



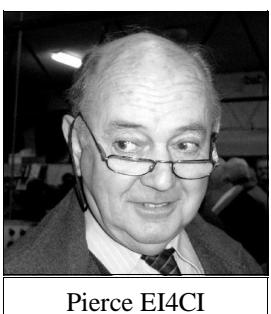
Dave EI2HR



Nicky EI2JL



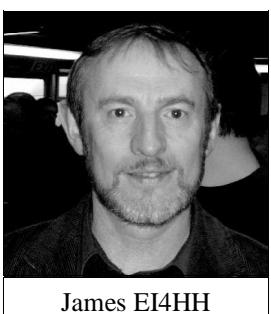
Dan EI3AE



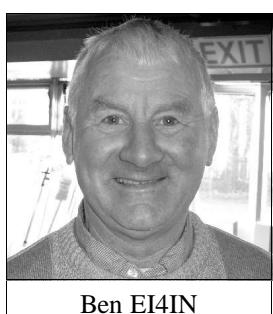
Pierce EI4CI



Mark EI4FNB



James EI4HH



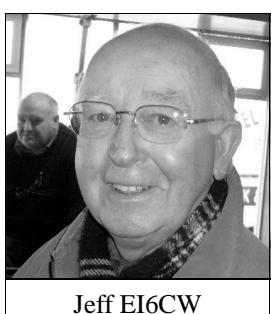
Ben EI4IN



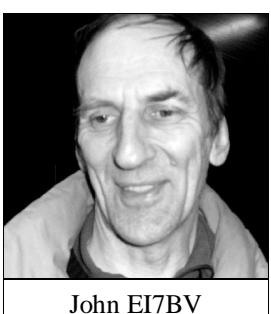
Bernard Mothersill



Jim MI3SBI



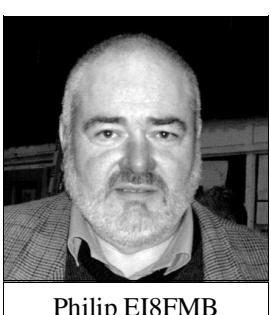
Jeff EI6CW



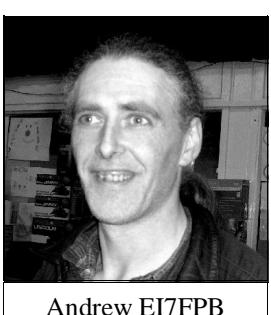
John EI7BV



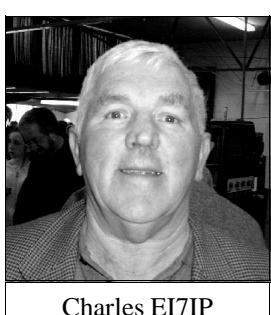
Terry EI7CBB



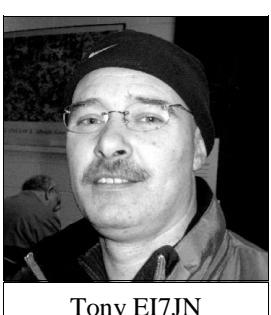
Philip EI8FMB



Andrew EI7FPB



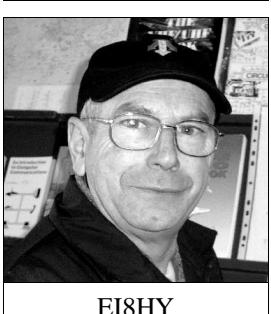
Charles EI7IP



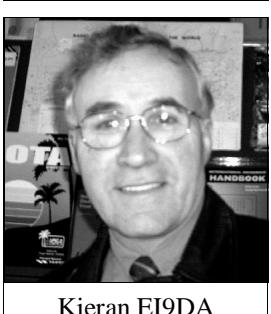
Tony EI7JN



Denis EI8HM



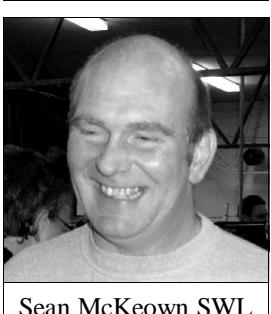
EI8HY



Kieran EI9DA



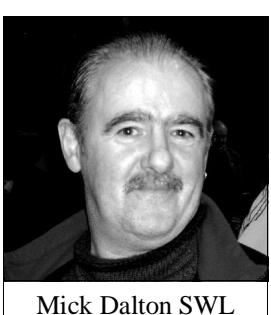
Raymond EI9DM



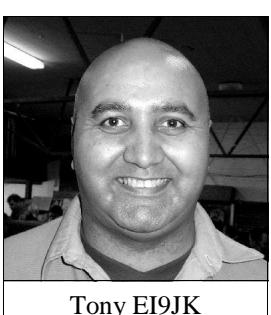
Sean McKeown SWL



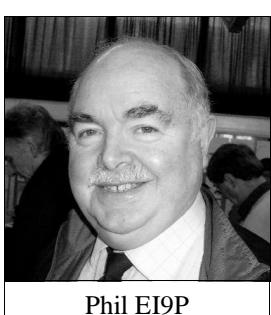
Eamonn EI9GO



Mick Dalton SWL



Tony EI9JK



Phil EI9P



Gary Renihan

Wireless Telegraphy: Switzerland and Ireland

Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937)

By Ita Marguet

This year, International Marconi Day fell by the distinguished physicist, Righi, on Saturday April 26th and to mark the some of whose lectures the young Marconi had attended. Marconi became obsessed and worked more intensively than ever in his laboratory at Pontecchio.

In early 1895 after some encouraging trials he was ready to take his experiments outdoors and especially into mountainous areas.

On a recent visit to the Swiss Alps, at Les Marecottes and the village of Salvan in the Canton of Valais, I discovered that

Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937), inventor and pioneer of wireless telegraphy, had spent the summer of 1895 in Salvan.

His early experiments there had produced pioneering and far-reaching results which, in later years, have brought renown to Salvan and to Switzerland. Through his use of wireless transmission and Atlantic telegraphy Marconi's prodigious work and legacy had long been recognized in Ireland and beyond.

It gave birth to wireless radio which from its infancy has grown into the 21st century to become the forerunner in development of the wireless computer in today's world of advanced technology.

Profile in brief

Italian-Irish electrical engineer, Guglielmo Marconi was born in Bologna on 25 April 1874 into a wealthy family; his mother Annie Jameson was the daughter of Andrew Jameson of the Dublin whiskey-distilling family of Daphne Castle, Co. Wexford.

With his mother and older brother he spent his childhood in England, part of it in Bedford. He was educated privately at Bologna, Florence and Leghorn.

From a young age Marconi developed a passion for the sciences and studied physics at the technical institute of Livorno and the University of Bologna.

At his father's estate, Villa Griffone in Pontecchio, he used his own laboratory for rudimentary experiments in trying to transmit a wireless message with electromagnetic waves using many previous discoveries and research by other scientists of the time.

The year 1894 was a turning point in Marconi's life. Shortly after the death of Heinrich Hertz, a German physicist, he read an article in a scientific journal describing Hertz's experimentation in electromagnetic waves that had been written

some of whose lectures the young Marconi had attended. Marconi became obsessed and worked more intensively than ever in his laboratory at Pontecchio.

In early 1895 after some encouraging trials he was ready to take his experiments outdoors and especially into mountainous areas.

In 1896 Marconi went to England where he filed the world's first patent No. 12,039 of 2 June 1896 for a system using Hertzian waves.

In 1897 he formed the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company.

In 1900 he took out the historic British patent No. 7,777 for «tuned or syntonic telegraphy».

In 1905 he patented his horizontal directional aerial and in 1912 a «timed spark» system for generating continuous waves. In 1909, with Karl Ferdinand Braun, he shared the Nobel Prize in Physics for important radio communications.

He has been the recipient of honorary doctorates of several universities and many other international honours and awards. He represented Italy at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

In 1929 the Italian Government granted him the hereditary title of Marchese.

The following year he was elected President of the Royal Italian Academy and held many important academic and institutional positions in Italy and abroad.

His experiments and achievements are well documented in technical and professional literature that includes bibliographies and book collection on his life.

In 1905 Guglielmo Marconi married the Hon. Beatrice O'Brien, daughter of the 14th Baron Inchiquin, the marriage being annulled in 1927, in which year he married the Countess Bezzi Scali of Rome.

He had a son and two daughters by his first and one daughter by his second wife.

At age 63, Guglielmo Marconi died in Rome on 20 July 1937.

As homage, a two minute silence was observed on the radio waves worldwide in respect of the man recognized as inventor of the first practical system of wireless telegraphy who had become known as the «Father of Radio».

Salvan, Switzerland

In the southwest of Switzerland, Salvan is over 900 metres above sea level. In the last years of the 19th century the village was known as a health resort reputed for its salubrious climate and good air.

Recovering from a respiratory ailment, it is thought Marconi had been recommended to go there.

Overlooking the deep Triente gorge at the edge of the Mont Blanc range, access to the village was by a steep and winding path, nicknamed «route de Mont» leading from Vernayaz in the Rhone valley.

Accompanied by mules to carry their luggage and equipment, Marconi with his brother visited Salvan in the summer of 1895. Alfonso soon left but Guglielmo Marconi rented accommodation on the second floor of a house in the village on Millionaire Street that belonged to the uncle of the boy who was to become his assistant and helper in Salvan.

Playing in the area, the boy was soon intrigued by some odd-looking metallic apparatus lying in the grass and eagerly agreed to assist Marconi in the experiments that were to follow.

The equipment consisted of a battery, a Rhumkorff induction coil, a Righi spark generator and an antenna.

Salvan was essentially a pastoral community where villagers were happy to welcome tourists to help improve their meagre standard of living. They observed Marconi's activities with some awe and suspicion but the event remained trivial for many years while being passed on locally by word of mouth.

As Marconi's reputation spread, the people of Salvan began to realize the importance of his visit in the summer of 1895. It proved to be the beginning of a long and profitable relationship between Switzerland and the Marconi Wireless Telegraphy Company which equipped most of the national broadcasting stations and airport telecommunications facilities during the 1920s and 30s.

Organized in 1965 by members of the Development Society of Salvan, the personal story of Marconi's young helper, Maurice Gay-Balmaz, was tape recorded. He vividly recalls how Marconi worked for more than one and a half months in

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

the surrounding areas of the village to successfully send a message further than a kilometre away

Progress was slow with long hours and many adjustments that were required before success was achieved and wireless telegraphy was born.

Marconi is said to have been stationed on a flat-topped rock «La Pierre Bergère», also known as the Shepherdess stone, with a small transmitter while Maurice gradually moved further away with a receiver which sounded a bell when a signal was received. Maurice carried the receiving aerial raised on an eight foot pole and waved a red flag when the receiver bell sounded and a white flag when no sound was heard.

From the rock, links were progressively established with local places ... and ... even with a «piece of land at the top of Les Marecottes» more than half a kilometre away.

By July 1895 in Salvan, Marconi had succeeded in transmitting signals over a few dozen metres. By the end of August, using various apparatus and components, with his technical equipment of elevated aerial, transmitter and receiver, he was able to transmit Morse code over a distance of almost one kilometre.

Marconi had realized his dream to transmit a signal without any kind of metallic connection; it was the beginning of his pivotal involvement in wireless radio.

Ireland and beyond

Marconi's invention of the short-wave wireless system provided the first real technical alternative to the Atlantic telegraph cable the first of which was laid in 1866 from Valentia Island, Co. Kerry to Heart's Content, Newfoundland.

Marconi's decision to work and develop his technology in Ireland was based on the obvious advantage of the country's position on the Atlantic seaboard. From 1916 he had begun to exploit short waves for more efficient transmissions over longer distances that diminished the importance of Ireland's position.

Beginning in 1898 it started with a twelve-kilometre link for Lloyd's between Ballycastle, Co. Antrim and Rathlin Island. The first line wireless report on a sports event was made in July 1899 when Marconi transmitted a commentary on the Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) Regatta from aboard a steamboat to the Irish Daily Express in Dublin.

The next year he took out the British patent No. 7,777 for tuned wireless telegra-

phy. On 12 December 1901 he successfully transmitted the letter S a distance of 3,300 km or 2,100 miles across the Atlantic Ocean from a station at Poldu, Cornwall to St. John's, Newfoundland with a monitoring station established at Crookhaven, Co. Cork.

Three experimental stations were established in Ireland.

In 1905 Marconi set up a high-powered station at Clifden, Co. Galway, which from October 1907 transmitted to a sister station in Grace Bay, Nova Scotia, to provide the first reliable transatlantic telegraphy service. The station was destroyed in 1922 when it ceased broadcasting but by then Marconi had established a new transatlantic station in Wales.

To monitor ship-to-shore broadcasts or to allow for the simultaneous receiving and transmission of wireless signals, he had established stations in Ireland at Crookhaven, Co. Cork, Letterfrack and Derrygimla, Co. Galway, Rosslare, Co. Wexford, Malin Head, Co. Donegal, Ballybunion (in 1912 transmitting to Louisberg, Nova Scotia) and Valentia, Co. Kerry.

Marconi was experimenting with new frontiers of telegraphic transmission in

Europe and beyond. In England he erected permanent wireless stations at The Needles, Isle of Wight, at Bournemouth and later at the Haven Hotel, Poole in Dorset.

In 1922 the BBC in England using Marconi equipment had demonstrated the potential for civil broadcasting.

In September 1924 station 2BE came on the air in Belfast broadcasting with a

1.5kW transmitter. It was perhaps inevitable that the Irish Free State would turn to Marconi to establish its broadcasting capability, and on 14 August 1923 Marconi's Wireless Company made the first radio broadcast from the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire.

In 1924 the company established a test station in South William Street, Dublin. The Wireless Society of Ireland had been formed in 1925 in anticipation of the

Dublin Wireless Exhibition in November 1925 when station 2RN came on the air. It began a process of fundamental social change. In 1995, an International Conference on «100 Years of Radio» was held in London to celebrate Guglielmo Marconi's pioneering work in wireless

telegraphy that began in Switzerland and his native Italy and further developed largely in Ireland.

Cradle of telecommunications

In 1974, to celebrate the centenary of Marconi's birth the municipality of Salvan placed a plaque on the rock of «La Pierre Bergère». The plaque was unveiled a year later during a ceremony attended by numerous officials of the region and the Vice-Consul of Italy in Switzerland. A final consecration was made in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of Marconi's visit to Salvan and a decision by the authorities to re-enact his experiments. With the support of the Swiss Telecom PTT and the Swiss National Audiovision Museum, an exhibition was set up in the village with early wireless and radio sets including a replica of Marconi's transmitter for visitors to experiment with the apparatus to see the sparks glow and hear the bell ring.

A Marconi «trail» was laid out to a number of places where signals had been received in 1895, presenting the main features of the area. The trail begins at the exhibition museum and ends at the house in the village where Marconi stayed.

On 25 September 2003, in the presence of Swiss dignitaries and representatives from the scientific community, a ceremony was held in Salvan to celebrate the pioneering work done by Marconi.

A bronze plaque (Milestone IEEE) was presented to the Salvan-Marconi Foundation by the Association mondiale des ingénieurs (IEEE) and placed at the site of Marconi's discovery in distinguished recognition of Salvan as the cradle of telecommunications and forerunner to the progress and achievements in wireless technology that have continued world wide.

On 18 March 2005, the French-language journal, *La Gazette*, Salvan, published an article about the recognition given to Marconi by a recent visit from top industrial leaders in the world of telecommunications (Nokia, Ericsson, Saab, Siemens, Alcatel, Alenia, Spazio), and researchers from the European space agency, other academic and scientific institutions. Their

visit to the Marconi Museum and the site of «La Pierre Bergère» marked the conclusion of a European research colloquium on the project COST-284 with participation from eighteen countries, held under the direction of Professor Juan R. Mosig (LEMA-EPFL), President of the European project. Quoting Yves Fourrier, historian and President of the Salvan-Marconi Foundation : « *Hormis l'honneur qui rejaillit sur notre fondation,*

il est particulièrement intéressant de re- (Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

trouver des chercheurs développant les produits de demain face à Marconi et aux premiers pas des télécommunications. ». The article includes a photograph of Professeur Juan Mosig (EPFL), Dr. Per Ingvarsson (Saab Erikson Space), Dr. Jussi Rahola (Nokia) and Yves Fournier (Fondation Marconi).

References

This piece is drawn from sources that include the Encyclopedia of Ireland and available contemporary material in Switzerland. Yves Fournier, historian and President of the Salvan-Marconi Foundation, is author of an Exhibition booklet, *Salvan sur les pas de Marconi or Following in Marconi's Footsteps*, available from the Commune of Salvan, Tourist Office, CH 1922, Salvan, Switzerland.

Note: This text updates an original article of the same title dated January 2004, and continues to acknowledge all sources used in its preparation.

Mid Ulster Amateur Radio Club Annual Radio Rally

Sunday 29th May 2005
starting at 12-00 noon
at
**The Embankment Hotel,
Lurgan, Co. Armagh**

All the usual traders bring and buy etc
For more info contact Ivan GI0SZH or
John GI0KUH at j.p.mccabe@btinternet.
com

Marconi Experimenter Group

The Marconi Experimenter Group has been formed in Galway by a group of experienced experimenters and communications professionals. More details and web site to follow soon.

The groups' callsign is EI0MRG.

**National
4 Metre Activity Nights**
First Tuesday every month
70.2625 MHz FM
2000-2200

AREN assist RAYNET on Isle of Man Manx National Rally.

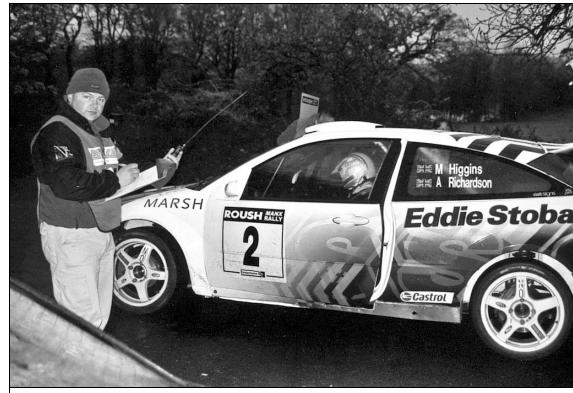
The Roush Manx Rally was held over the weekend 6 - 7 May 2005. This consisted a total of 14 stages (120 competitive miles) through high streets, hills and countryside of the island returning to the TT grandstand for a high profile finish.

Each year Raynet provides a network of radio operators for each stage and a centrally located controller.

This year RAYNET Isle of Man was assisted by Munster area AREN Co-ordinator Conor O Neill, EI4JN.

SWL and rally guru John Harrington also made the trip to provide valuable assistance.

Equipment used comprised a Yaesu VX-7R and micro mag-mount antenna. Operations were carried out on 2 metres and 70cms simplex frequencies and on the GD repeater. A special UHF link was set up to facilitate communications between some of the more remote stages and RAYNET control located at the TT Grandstand in Douglas.



Conor EI4JN in action

The event, won by local man Mark Higgins in a current model Ford Focus WRC passed without any major incident.

Isle of Man Raynet Group controller Dougie Corkhill GD8KWM and Raynet Secretary Carol James expressed their gratitude for the assistance provided by AREN and extended an invitation for AREN operators to assist on future events.

The Munster area Coordinator thanked Raynet Isle of Man for the opportunity for both agencies to work together on the high profile event and reciprocated the invitation for Raynet to take part in future AREN activities.

2 and 6 Metre Activity

On April 28th after the 6 meter band had been open for several hours a sporadic event occurred on 144MHz that lasted for about 30 minutes.

EI5FK worked I8MPO in Naples.

The 6 meter event was extensive with nearly 100 qso's in 12 countries, EI7CD was also heard working this event.

On May 8th there was an extensive aurora on 144 MHz that lasted for several hours, EI5FK reports working 60 QSO's in 16 DXCC countries and 47 squares in this event. It is unusual for events like this to occur close to solar minimum but the sun is never really quiet at any time in the solar cycle.

April and September are the best months to monitor for aurora.

Listen to the DK0WCY beacon on 10.144 MHz for reports of activity.

Limerick 70 cm Repeater

The Limerick 70cm repeater is back on air from its test QTH in Patrickswell, Co. Limerick.

The Limerick club extends its thanks to Ron EI2JP for supplying and programming the PMR rigs.

Signal reports and queries to Mike at 'EI9FEB at Eircom dot net'.

Receive RB5, 433.125 MHz
TX is +1.6 MHz offset
CTCSS / PL tone is 103.5 Hz

Trophy Winners at the IRTS AGM

Arup Cup
Service to the hobby
Sean O Suilleabhairn EI3IP

Sheila Piper Cup
IRTS News Services
Mark Wall EI7IS



Cork Radio Club Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Cork Radio Club took place at Wilton Park House on Monday March 21st. Reviews and reports of the club's activities over the past year were presented.

The outgoing chairman Jeremy EI5GM in welcoming everyone commented on the fact of the club's involvement with IRTS, having in the last year no less than six of its members on the national committee, including past president Dave Moore EI4BZ and current Vice President Finbarr EI1CS.

It is hoped to plan more activity during the coming year.

John EI3EC the club Hon Vice President presided over the election of officers and committee for the coming year and the following were elected: Chairman. Stephen O'Leary EI6JA, Hon. Sec. Finbarr Buckley EI1CS, Treasurer Dick Bermingham EI6HH Committee members Anatoly EI4JF, Pat EI2GHB and Dave EI9FBB

The Shannon Basin Challenge 2004



The Shannon Basin Club run a one-day challenge on the first Sunday of November with the aim of encouraging activity on the HF bands from EI and the trophies are presented at the IRTS AGM.

Pat O'Connor EI9HX was the winner of the Lough Allen Shield as the top entrant in the SSB Section.

(Top picture: EI9HX and EI4GK)

Brian Canning EI8IU from County Leitrim won the Lough Ree Shield as the leading CW entrant.

(Middle Picture: EI8IU and EI4GK)

The Lough Derg Shield was presented to Brendan Marsh from Offaly for winning the SWL section.

(Bottom Picture: Brendan Marsh and EI4GK)

This challenge is an annual event and the shield will be competed for again in November.

The Shannon Basin Club thanks all who supported last years event and they welcome comments or suggestions on the running of this years challenge.

Contest Calendar

May 2005

21/22nd	1200-1200	EU PSK DX Contest	PSK31
21/22nd	1800-1800	King of Spain Contest	CW
28/29th	0000-2400	CQWW WPX Contest	CW

June 2005

4/5th	1500-1500	IARU Region 1 Field Day	CW
11th	0000-2400	Portugal Day Contest	SSB
11/12th	0000-1600	WW South America DX Contest	CW
11/12th	1500-1500	GACW CW DX Contest	CW
18/19th	0000-2400	All Asian DX Contest	CW
18/19th		Region 1 Six Metre Contest	
25/26th	1400-1400	Marconi Memorial Contest	CW
25/26th	1800-1800	King of Spain Contest	SSB

July 2005

1st	0000-2359	Canada Day Contest	CW/SSB
2/3rd		VHF/UHF Field Day	
2/3rd	0000-2400	YV DX Contest	CW/SSB
9/10th	1200-1200	IARU HF Championships	CW/SSB
16/17th	1800-2100	CQWW VHF Contest	All
30/31st	1200-1200	Islands On The Air Contest	CW/SSB



Peter H Schulz VE3AVZ and Dave Ryan EI4HT, taken on February 4th 2005 on Robinson Crusoe Island in the South Pacific. Peter and his XYL Valerie are taking a Cruise onboard M.V. Discovery.

The cruise itinerary, called in the Wake of the Bounty, began on February 1st in Valparaiso and took in Easter Island, Pitcairn, Bora Bora, Papete, Tahiti, Cook Islands, Fiji Islands and arriving in Auckland on the 2nd of March.

The M.V. Discovery is registered in Hamilton and operated by Discovery World Cruises, is the old M.V. Island Princess that featured in the TV Show "The Love Boat" See more information on the vessel at: www.voyagesofdiscovery.com.

Before its Valparaiso the Vessel completed a three week itinerary in Antarctica.

When not cruising the South Pacific, Peter can be found on the Canadian Maritime Net on 14.122.5 MHz.

Dave EI4HT is Hotel Engineer on the M.V. Discovery.

South Dublin Radio Club Morse Classes

Morse classes have been held in South Dublin Radio Club for the past few months, run by one of Ireland's most experienced CW operators, Paul O'Kane EI5DI.

A number of SDR members have recently passed the CW test. Paul Hegarty is one of them, and he has swapped his "B" call sign for the two-letter call EI8JQ. Congratulations to Paul.

Maritime Morse Code Station Granted License

The F.C.C., the telecommunications regulatory body in the United States, has granted a license for a new, common carrier, class 1A CW coast station to the Maritime Radio Historical Society (MRHS), the group that brought ex-RCA coast station KPH back to life.

The MRHS applied for the license to assure that US commercial Morse operations will continue into the future. We believe this must be the first time in many years that the F.C.C. has granted a new license for this service.

The hours of operation for the station have not yet been determined. But the basic details are:

Callsign: KSM

Location: San Francisco, CA

Frequencies: 426, 500, 6474 and 12993 kHz

Power: 5 kW all frequencies

For more information visit: <http://www.radiomarine.org/>

Packet Radio News

Following the recently reported network reconfiguration and improved connectivity in the south east of the country, internet 'trunk' links have now been established from Waterford (EI3RCW-8) to Mayo (EI7MRE-2) and Co Dublin (EI7SDX-9).

This will ease the congestion at EI7KRC which until now has been the only AX25 route open from the south and south east of Ireland to the Dublin area.

The new routes also provide increased access with good data rates, from the Dublin area to the BBS of EI3DIB (TIPBBS) and others, as well as from the SE to DX clusters EI7SDX (SHANDX, Co Dublin), EI7wdx (wdx, Co Wicklow) and (MAYODX, Co Mayo).

Both the BBS and DX cluster nodes are linked into global networks providing bulletins and real time information from around the world.

APRS

The APRS geographical position reporting system is also going from strength to strength in Ireland. This system using a small packet modem and a hand held transceiver or mobile permits a flag to appear on maps detailing position, speed and direction of the user. Fixed stations and stations providing weather information can also be accessed.

The pockets of APRS activity in Ireland are linked into the global internet APRS system, which can of course be accessed from anywhere in the World.

Great if you want to check on your friend rock climbing in the Wicklow mountains whilst on a business trip in New York!

There are APRS Digipeaters on Mt Leinster, Templetown, Co Waterford on the national and European APRS frequency of 144.800 with one in Cork due online shortly.

Internet APRS gateways are also available in Co Dublin on 144.875 MHz and Bray, Co Wicklow on 144.925 MHz, where APRS shares the frequency with the local DX cluster nodes. For APRS please use the UI-PATH of WIDE2-2.

There are also gateways to all these systems from the Internet for radio amateurs, albeit sometimes with password protection.

Contact EI3IO, EI6IZ, EI7IG or EI6CPB or other AX25 packet system operators for more information.

VHF AM

A VHF AM Yahoo Group has been formed recently in the UK and already has about 100 members, with new people joining all the time.

The group has settled on the following frequencies as centres of AM activity, but emphasises that these are not 'must use' frequencies, but just somewhere to look for AM operation.

They are: 29.050, 50.570, 70.260, 144.570 and 432.570 MHz.

To join the group, send an e-mail to VHFam-subscribe at yahoogroups.com.



Contest Corner

With
Dave EI4BZ
ei4bz@eircom.net

EU Sprint

Results for the Autumn leg of the EU Sprint SSB contest, which took place on 2nd October last, are now out. They show three EI entries, Thos EI2JD with 84 QSOs, Joe EI7GY just behind him with 83 QSOs and Paul EI3ENB with a score of 26.

This contest takes place twice a year, in the Spring and Autumn, and lasts for just 4 hours, using 3 bands, 20m, 40m and 80m.

The contest has a 'QSY Rule' similar to the rule used in the EI Counties contests.

The next EU Sprint SSB contest is on Saturday 9th April 2005.

CW Field Day
June 4/5th

VHF/UHF Field Day
July 2/3rd

Region 1 50 MHz Contest - June 18/19th

On behalf of the IARU, Region 1 I would like to invite you and your fellow radio amateurs to participate in the annual 50 MHz Region 1 Contest, which will take place, as usual, on the third (3) Weekend in June (18-19. June 2005).

This year Polski Związek Krotkofałowcow (PZK) is adjudicating this contest. Paper documents shall be send to Contest Manager of PZK: Elzbieta Wiza, SP7RFE, ul. Orkana 5 m 14, PL-96-100 Skierniewice, Poland. Logs in digital format (EDI) shall be send to: VHFcontest@pzk.org.pl. We would like to put your attention to [IIIa.A1-p2 nov.02] in the "VHF Managers Handbook" about "Experiments with electronic log controls" and promote usage of electronic logs (in EDI format) in your country, and sending digital logs for evaluation to VHFcontest@pzk.org.pl

EI Counties Contest Spring 2005

There appeared to be more activity than usual in the EI counties contest, both on FM and SSB. This may have been helped by the favourable weather on the day. It was also observed that there was a welcome increase in the number of GI stations on the air.

The following counties were heard by Joe (EI7GY) who was operating from Arderin, Co. Offaly.

Armagh, Carlow, Clare, Cork, Derry, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Offaly, Roscommon, Tipperary, Tyrone, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.

IRTS 2m Counties Contest Winners 2004



Joe EI7GY
Spring 2004
Low Power/p



Oscar EI7IW
Spring 2004
High Power Fixed



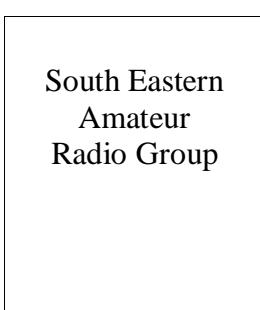
Tom EI7HT
Spring 2004
Low Power Fixed



Kyle EI2JO
Spring 2004
FM Only



Declan EI9FVB
Spring 2004
High Power/p



South Eastern
Amateur
Radio Group



Fr. Niall EI4CF
Autumn 2004
High Power Fixed



Tom EI7HT
Autumn 2004
Low Power Fixed



John EI4HS/p
Autumn 2004
Low Power/p



Michael EI4JL
Autumn 2004
FM Only

Gerry EI9DZ Wins Construction Shield

Gerry EI9DZ has been an honorary overseas member of the Mid-Sussex Amateur Radio Society for some years and is an active participant in the Sunday morning nets.

Last year he entered the society's annual construction contest with a Z-Match Antenna Tuner and was awarded the winner's shield at a ceremony in Sussex. The shield has to be returned to headquarters by the end of April so the attached photograph of Gerry and the shield was taken at Fingal Radio Club at a recent "showing off" session.

Congratulations to Gerry for maintaining his usual high standard of home-brewing.



DUBUS Magazine

IRTS has been appointed as the Irish distributor for the DUBUS Magazine, a quarterly magazine for VHF, UHF and Microwave.

This is a publication that no serious VHF/UHF DXer should be without. It is published quarterly and the last issue had 116 A5 pages. It is mailed directly to subscribers from the publishers in Germany.

Annual subscription is €21.00 and this should be forwarded to

Dave Moore, EI4BZ,
Dooneen, Carrigtwohill,
Co. Cork.

Low Cost, High Quality QSLs
by
LZ1JZ QSL-PRINT
www.LZ1JZ.com

New Radio Group for Scientific Researchers

Dr YL/OM,
We would like to inform, that a new group joining amateurs was recently formed. This group is called ISSARO and is dedicated to promote friendship between ham radio operators which are also scientific researchers (work at university or institute).

The website of our group with all necessary information is located at:
<http://www.issaro.net/>

Please promote our group in any media you can. We would like to reach all possible interested persons.

With amateur 73s
Luke SP8QED
Member-founder of ISSARO

Members Advertisements

For Sale: Kenwood TS440SAT, fully loaded, i.e. filters, CW, SSB, AM, FM, voice board, auto ATU, hand mic, power cord, handbook, workshop manual and Telex coms headphones. P.W.O., can be tested. Price ... €600.00
Contact Gerry EI9DZ on 087-2469432 or 01-8220122

Wanted: Transistor service sheets or trader service sheets, all makes.
Contact EI6GU on 01-8701191

For Sale: Kenwood/Trio Custom Special TX - 599 Transmitter (1965).
Freq - 10 - 80m. Modes :AM/SSB/CW
Also Drake R4 Receiver. Freq 10-80m.
Modes :AM/SSB/CW - €300.00 o.n.o.
Also Icom IC-751A HF Transceiver plus matching ATU.
Freq: 10 - 160 + WARC Bands.
Modes: AM/FM/SSB/CW
Output: 100W
Price : €650.00 o.n.o.
Contact John on 01-4505155 or johnny1@oceanfree.net

For Sale: Yaesu FT-8900R Quad Band 10/6/2m/70cm Mobile Transceiver
Frequency range TX: 28-29.7MHz, 50-54MHz, 144-146MHz, 430-440MHz.
Output 50/20/10/5W. Perfect Condition.
Upgrade Forces Sale. Cost €199.00
Will sell for €50.00
Contact Aidan EI5HW 086-252 7182.

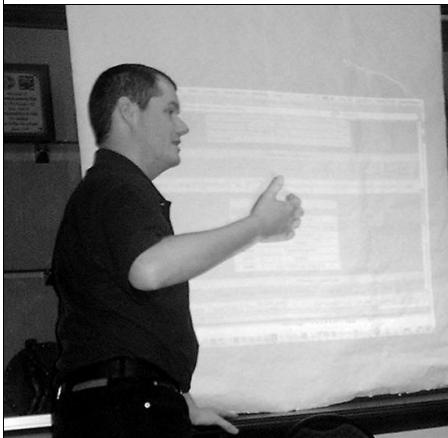
Wanted: 4-pin vintage valve for restoration of old wavemeter.
Ken EI9EL ken.obrien@dit.ie or 01-4975854

For Sale: Byonics PocketTracker <http://www.byonics.com/pockettracker/>
I have three of these kits surplus to requirements at €100.00 each

Tokyo Hy-Power HL-50B:
5w in 50 watts out. 3.5 MHz to 50 MHz amplifier. €250.00 o.n.o
John Ronan <jronan at tssg dot org>, +353-51-302938

For Sale: HF Transceiver, Kenwood TS 440SAT. Price... €450.00
40 foot self supporting tower with work platform. Price... €300.00
Phone Stephen EI9HC on 087-6960154 or 046-943035

SEARG APRS Lecture by EI7IG and EI8JA



John EI7IG explains it all

At the April general meeting of South Eastern Amateur Radio Group members and visitors enjoyed an APRS presentation and demo which was given by John Ronan, EI7IG.

John gave an overview of APRS and explained many of its uses and capabilities. John EI8JA, assisted in the latter part of the meeting by 'going mobile' while the others watched the APRS system track him aided by a projector and large screen. This opportunity was also used to demonstrate the text and e-mail capabilities of the system.

Thanks to EI7IG and EI8JA for organising a very enjoyable presentation.

Ye Olde Hurdy Gurdy Vintage Radio Museum

Tony, EI5EM has designed a new webpage for Ye Olde Hurdy Gurdy Vintage Radio Museum, located in the Martello tower in Howth.

The new website has photographs of some of the technical and amusing exhibits from the Museum. The address of the new webpage is www.qsl.net/museum.html

The Museum is open on weekends from 11 until 4. If you are out for a drive or a walk in Howth, why not drop in. It is well worth a visit.

The enthusiastic curator, Pat Herbert will be delighted to show you around. The contact telephone number is 086-8154189. It is hoped that the museum will be open daily shortly until the end of summer.

The museum deserves the support of everybody interested in the history of telecommunications, but particularly from radio experimenters.

Your Letters

Dear Editor,

The world at our fingertips:

The world at our fingertips - that's how we radio amateurs used to think of ourselves, and that's what made us different. In recent years, things have changed slightly. Anyone with wireless (the in-word for radio) broadband at home can connect to the internet from anywhere in the house or garden, and go shopping, listen to radio stations, and talk to people anywhere in the world. More than ever, they now have the world at their fingertips - all without having to worry about antennas or propagation or TVI.

Is this fun? Absolutely.

Is this amateur radio? Absolutely not!

By definition, radio amateurs use radio (RF) for communication. If the entire path between stations is not RF, then I believe it's not amateur radio. Is there any technical merit in internet "QSOs" while, for example, operating mobile from the back of an elephant? Yes, but no more than that from using a wireless connection to surf the web. Elephant mobile may be more fun, but that's not the point.

School children talking to astronauts via Echolink or any other VoIP technology is not amateur radio. Yes, it's fun, but I can think of many other technical pursuits that are fun and that are not amateur radio.

New technology is fine, so long as it is complementary, and not a replacement. Once you use an engine in a yacht you can't claim to be sailing.

Once you link amateur radio to the internet, you're communicating via the internet – not amateur radio.

Why then does the IRTS condone such an inappropriate mix of technologies?

Is it an internet society or a radio society? It can hardly be both, especially when the internet is promoted as a replacement for RF.

Can we look forward to a change of constitution and a new name – the IIS – Irish Internet Society?

73,
Paul O'Kane EI5DI

19th April 2005

Dear EDitor,

After seeing the advert in the last issue of Echo Ireland by LZ1JZ QSL-PRINT, I decided to look into getting my QSL cards printed at a more competitive price. I usually get mine printed in the UK by a very reputable company. These cost me 119 euro per 1000 and are full colour front and black & white on the reverse side, they are also a custom design. I found many different suppliers worldwide so I spent many nights looking around the internet and reading reviews on many sites. I then went and had a look through my collection of cards received and checked out the printing verses the reviews. The one that seemed to stand out were the cards printed by Gennady, UX5UO at www.ux5uoqsl.com

I e-mailed Gennady and explained what I was looking for. Less than one hour later I had a reply. I sent the images for the front and rear of my card attached to the next email. Next morning, the proofs were in my "in box" with the price. I was stunned when I read 54 euro including postage for the 1000 cards. Payment is simple through PayPal. Made my payment the next day and received confirmation the following day.

Gennady e-mailed me three days later to let me know that the cards were on the way (in two packages, one registered & one ordinary post). There is some weight limit on registered post into Europe from his QTH. The first pack arrived the following week. Two days later, the registered pack arrived. The cards were outstanding. Excellent sharp print quality on the front (considering that the image I sent was not the of the greatest quality), perfect layout on the rear and unlike some printer's, his own advertising "UX5UO print" is printed very, very small on the bottom right of the rear of the cards.

From my first contact with Gennady to having all the cards in the shack took 17 days. I have since ordered another 4000 cards a week ago, costing only 196 euro and I received an e-mail last night from Gennady, cards are printed and will be posted next Monday.

If any readers want to see what his work is like, I am more than happy to forward a card to them.

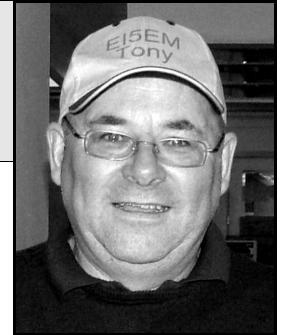
Check out his website, ask for samples and you won't look back and you will not find this quality at this price anywhere else

Your in radio
Dave - EI7JK

Fishing for QSOs !

by

Tony Breathnach (EI5EM)



At two recent rallies, I sold some "roach poles" in three, six, eight and nine metre lengths. These hollow light fishing poles, made from several fibreglass telescopic sections, are ideal for making efficient and inexpensive vertical HF antennas. They are especially suitable for portable use, as they are easy to erect and retract, collapsing to a mere metre in height. One gentleman delighted in telling me that a roach pole would never work as an antenna because it was made of fibreglass, which is an insulator!

I purchase my fishing poles on eBay from Leslie Jackson's Amtools Shop, <http://stores.ebay.co.uk/AMTOOLS>. You can also contact Leslie directly at hjackson@hotmail.com.

Please mention my name if contacting him. Poles are also available from fishing tackle shops, but can be a lot more expensive there.

The antenna, including the metal base, was made for the North Dublin Radio Club (EIONDR), where it has to be erected and dismantled every club night quickly and without too much fuss. It also has to be compact enough for storing, as well as being efficient and safe in use.

A length of flexible wire, slightly longer than the fully extended pole, was used for the antenna. This runs inside the entire length of the extended nine-metre pole. The first job was to secure one end of the wire inside the top telescopic section. I stripped back the insulation from the first 15 cms. of the wire and twisted the strands together with a pliers. I unscrewed the rubber cap from the bottom of the pole and removed the top or innermost concentric section, being careful to keep the other sections in place.

Using a hacksaw, I cut off a few centimetres at a time from the tapered end until the stripped copper wire just about fitted through the opening. I then fed the cable through from the wider end, until the bare wire protruded a few centimetres above the top. Using a pliers, I pulled on the exposed bare wire until it was firmly secured inside.

I replaced the small telescopic section into the pole, removed the top rubber cap, and fed the insulated wire into the pole from the bottom until the tip protruded

above the top. At the tip, I formed a small loop from the exposed copper wire, tinned it with solder to keep it in place, before removing the excess wire. The loop should be large enough to prevent the top section from recessing fully into the section below it.

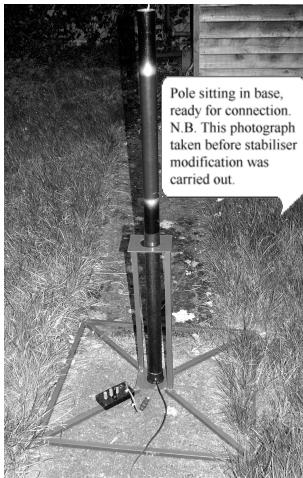
A small washer, nut or bead could also be threaded onto the wire (before forming the loop) to prevent this happening. A piece of string or a cable tie was secured to the loop to make extending the pole easier. The tip and loop were then sealed with self-amalgamating tape.

At this point, I fully extended the pole by pulling on the cable tie, allowing most of the slack cable to disappear into it as I did so. I made a small hole in the lower rubber cap, passed the loose end of the cable through it, before replacing the cap. When fully extended, I always check each joint for soundness before raising the pole into the vertical plane.

The pole is retracted by manually loosening the joints and pulling the wire down through the lower rubber cap. I offer a word of caution here.

The pole should extend and retract freely. If not, it could be that one of the telescopic sections has retracted into the wrong section. If this should happen, remove one of the bottom or top caps and correct the problem.

The pole has to be supported in some way. My brothers, Shane, is a metalwork teacher and I prevailed upon him to fabricate a sturdy, square, metal base to support the raised antenna. Each side of the base is 61 cms long. A square plate with an circular cut-out, sits at the centre of the



base, supported by diagonals from the corners. The bottom of the fibreglass pole fits snugly into the cut-out. An identical plate is located 50 cms. directly above the

base plate, supported by two vertical uprights. One slight problem is that the pole, being tapered, leaves a gap where it passes through the top plate. I plan to fit a plastic or foam collar around the pole at that point to prevent the antenna from moving about.

Read further below for another modification for added stability.

As the NDR antenna must be easily and quickly assembled and disassembled each club-night, I settled on plug and socket connections. I mounted the connections on the lid of a small plastic box, attached to the metal base by three self-tapping screws (having already drilled pilot holes). Three green terminal-post sockets, mounted on the lid, were wired together and also bonded electrically to the base by wiring to one of the self-tapping screws (spade connection).

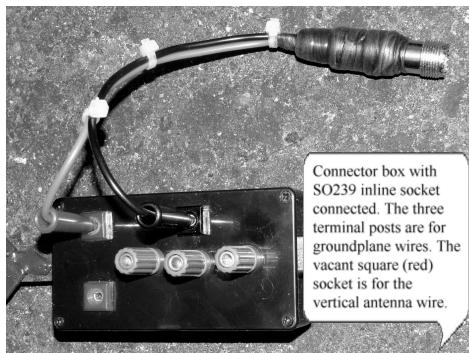
Ground planes or counterpoises can be plugged into these green connectors. If more than three ground planes are required, then the extras can be screwed to the green terminal posts, as each ground plane wire has a banana plug at one end and a spade connector at the other for that purpose.

I also fitted two red and one black countersunk sockets on the lid of the plastic box. The two red sockets are wired together, while the black socket is wired to the green terminals, all connections being made inside the box. A red plug soldered to the loose end of the antenna wire (trimmed to length) plugs into either of the red sockets.

For convenience, I made up a short patch lead with twin flexible cable. This is terminated with an inline SO239 connector at one end and a red and black banana plug at the other. The red plug is wired to the centre terminal of the SO239, the black to the body. The neck of the SO239 is sealed with self-amalgamating tape. The two coloured plugs of the patch lead connect to the matching coloured vacant sockets on the connection box.

The PL259 connector from the rig/ATU screws into the SO239 socket, which can be permanently left connected to the co-

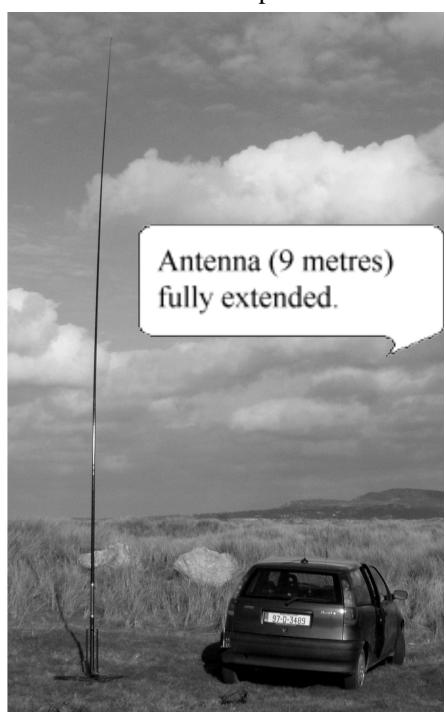
axial feeder so that it can be easily



plugged and unplugged. The ground planes, which plug into the green sockets, are laid out on the ground. I attached four rubber feet at the corners of the base, having previously given the metalwork two coats of blue metallic paint.

On a gusty St. Patrick's Day, I went mobile to the Bull Wall, where I set up the antenna and tested it for stability and safety. One particularly strong gust lifted one side of the base clear off the ground and almost toppled the antenna. The antenna will not normally have to survive such strong winds at NDR, but might if used portable. A few concrete blocks or sandbags would provide an inexpensive solution. However, I decided on a more permanent solution.

I cut four 20 cm. lengths of 12 mm. copper pipe and attached one at each corner of the base with two jubilee clips. My brother, Shane, supplied four solid iron rods, each about a metre long. These slide into the copper pipes and provide added stability. One end of each pipe is blocked or narrowed to prevent the rods



sliding in too far. The rods form a St. Brigid's Cross shape, when viewed from above. This modification made the antenna much safer. I erected it in my own back garden and left it there for a few days without mishap. The garden is not an ideal location for a vertical. It is shielded with high trees on two sides and by the house on another.

During those few days, I carried out some tests, using my antenna analyser and Elecraft K2. I connected three ten-metre long ground planes and twenty metres of 75 Ohm coaxial feeder. Reception, via the K2 automatic ATU, was better than on my full-size G5RV on all bands except for 80 metres. (I haven't tested performance on 6 metres). The difference was not huge but it was noticeable to the ear and on the S-meter.

The raw (no ATU connected) SWR readings, in brackets, for each band are as follows. 2m (1.8) 6m (1.6)
10m (4.6) 12m (2.8)
15m (8.7) 17m (12.3)
20m (9.8) 30m (5.2)
40m (2.3) 80m (22)
160m (>31).

The auto ATU was able to tune the antenna to less than 1.5:1 SWR on all HF bands.

As I was getting a low SWR on 2 metres, I decided to try the pole out, just for the heck of it.

I had a simplex QSO on S22 with Pat, EI5IF, who lives about eight Kilometres from me. Using 5 Watts, I contrasted it with reports received using my roof-mounted co-linear antenna. As expected, the pole was appreciably down on the co-linear. Pat's signal reduced from a 5/9+ to an S4 and my report changed from a 5/9+ to an S2. All things considered, not too bad at a pinch!

I just wonder what reports on 2 metres would be like if the pole was in the clear.

On Easter Saturday night I assembled the antenna at EIONDR, for the first time. I connected the antenna to my SGC2020 rig via a homebrew manual ATU.

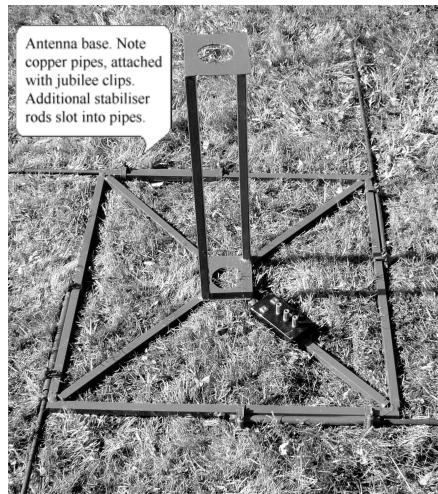
As is usual most weekends, there was an SSB contest taking place. The antenna performance was really impressive. Contacts were made without difficulty on 40 and 20 metres. Several QSOs were made with American stations with good reports each way. This was all the more impressive, considering that the SGC2020 can only deliver 20 Watts p.e.p. on SSB and contest QRM was heavy.

My NDR antenna solution is perhaps a

case of over-engineering, but then again, the antenna has to be efficient, portable, convenient and safe.

For permanent antenna installations, I am sure there are many simpler ingenious mounting solutions. The fishing pole could be clamped with jubilee clips (rubber strip between clips and pole to prevent damage) to an earth rod, pipe or stake, hammered into the ground. Cable ties instead of clamps might also suffice if there were enough of them.

I imagine that the bottom of the pole would need to be strengthened internally



by inserting a wooden dowel or something similar to prevent splitting as the clips are tightened.

The antenna support could also slide inside the bottom section of the pole.

It would also be a good idea to secure the telescopic joints with self-amalgamating, or other waterproof tape if the antenna is to be a permanently installed.

This antenna provides an ideal, inexpensive solution for portable operation or where space is limited.

It is not just another one of those compromise antennas with compromising results. It really **DOES** work very well.

The ground planes don't have to extend in a straight line either. They can also be cut to length for the individual bands using the formula 71.3 metres divided by the frequency in Megahertz. I cut three just for the 40-metre band. Any number of different length radials can be connected. The more, the merrier! If you build one of these, or a similar antenna, please let me know how you get on with it.

73 es 72 de Tony (EI5EM)
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(C) Tony Breathnach 2005.

Tipperary Amateur Radio Group, Experiments in the Galtees.

By John Ronan EI7IG

Over the weekend of the second and third of April, Tipperary Amateur Radio Group, with assistance from others, provided radio communications for almost all of the walks of the Galtee Walking Festival (<http://www.aherlow.com/html/walking.html>). Radio Personnel, were on all but the 'C' walk on Sunday and these included:

Saturday:

A Walk - EI7IG
B Walk - EI3FFB, EI3IQ, EI9HR
C Walk - EI5HE, EI3ENB
Base - EI2HI
Relay - EI3FU, EI8JA, EI5JF, EI2JB

Sunday:

A Walk - EI2IT
B Walk - EI3FFB
C Walk - (none)
Nature Trail - EI2JB
Base - EI7IG



Voice Communications
On Saturday, EI2HI used his handheld radio at the Foot Bar (Base), while using his Mobile Radio as a temporary relay station, this allowed for great flexibility for base operations and rapid deployment. In my personal opinion, Jackie, EI3FU played a critical part in the early part of the A walk (the ascent of Temple Hill) as he was the only station that could hear me and he relayed several messages between myself and EI2HI at base, in a clear and concise manner.

This initial stage has proven to be the most critical in the past, with walkers finding that they are unable to continue for whatever reason.

On Sunday morning we set up the antennas for voice (Diamond X300) and data (Slim Jim) at the Foot Bar (pictures attached).

I used a FT-1500M for APRS receive (we didn't transmit as we would most likely have desensed the Icom 910 which was



John EI7IG at the base station

used for voice communications) and a G3LIV soundmodem interface (<http://www.melvin2.freeserve.co.uk/>).

The computer was a Dell Latitude PII 366 with 128MB of Ram, Debian Linux installed, and I compiled Xastir (www.xastir.org), the APRS application, and all the components it needed from their source-code packages on Friday (1st) evening.

I used the linux 'soundmodem' package to do the decoding of the AX25 Frames. All this constituted our base station. I was surprised over the course of the day that there was no de-sense of the FT-1500M, listening on 144.800 MHz from the Icom 910 transmitting on 145.450 MHz

Digital Communications

EI8JA, and I (and others) have been experimenting with Automatic Packet/Position Reporting System (APRS), a definition of which is "APRS is a real-time tactical digital communications protocol for exchanging information between a large number of stations covering a large (local) area." (from <http://web.usna.navy.mil/~bruninga/APRS-docs/APRS.TXT>).

For the Galtee walk, we decided to test out how well it would work.



Some of the walkers enjoying a break and the fine view.

The unit tested was a PocketTracker from byonics (<http://www.byonics.com/pockettracker/>). They give about 235 milli-watts out, so they are most definitely QRP.

Last July, I got a few of the TARG club members and some others interested so I ordered 10 kits (I still have 3 if anyone is interested). Their construction isn't for the faint of heart and the club has several in various stages of construction.

Sunday morning, after setting up the antennae, we put a mobile digipeater on a site 7km due north of GalteeBeg at about 600m ASL. This had line of sight to most of the northern face of the Galtees.



The Riggers in action

Tommy, EI2IT had his pocket tracker in his bag with an extendable whip antenna protruding from a hole he cut in the bag. This allowed the antenna some clearance of the bag.

A Garmin Foretrex 101 was connected to the tracker and was strapped to the outside of the bag.

At approximately 9:05 UTC the first position report was received from his Tracker.

The organisers were quite impressed that we could follow his, and thus the groups progress up the mountain.

After watching his progress for a while I noticed that Tommy's track was veering south of what I thought was the intended route.

This was communicated to the leaders who after some discussion changed direction in order to approach the lake from the northern side.

Lessons Learned

From a personal point of view, I feel there were several valuable lessons that could be taken from the exercise:

(Continued on page 31)

(Continued from page 30)

Antennae:

Get them up as high and as clear from surrounding objects as possible.

Batteries:

Always use fresh Alkalines. If using rechargeables, know what the 'full' voltage of the pack/cell should be and check that it is correct, that way you won't get any nasty surprises

Relay Stations:

In hilly terrain like the Galtees it is worth investigating, in advance, for communications black spots. Relay stations are extremely important (thanks again to Jackie, EI3FU) in this case.

APRS

It has to be recognised that low powered handhelds and pockettrackers cannot hope to work satisfactorily without help in rough terrain such as the Galtees. The use of, and positioning of digipeaters must be considered. APRS works surprisingly well, and provides an excellent way of visualising a scene or event.

Conclusion

Events like the Glen of Aherlow Walking festival show that "Amateur" (See footnote) radio has a place at public service events.

Through having a moderate level of fitness, willing operators and relay stations, everyone benefits from it.

The organisers have a better communications system which helps to make the event safer.

Us experimenters become better and more proficient operators and, due to the efforts of the experimenters at the event, "Amateur" Radio gets some very good PR. This can only be of benefit in this current climate of reduced numbers entering into the hobby.

In summary, I think it shows that "Amateur" radio experimenters have quite a lot to offer at public service events such as this.

Footnote:

I put the word Amateur in quotation marks because at these events we are never referred to as amateurs, but as professionals, as we provide a professional level of service to the organisers and they are very grateful for it.

John EI7IG



Reading the Mail

By
Michael McNamara, EI2CL

Welcome to compilation #35 of "Reading the Mail" – an account of IRTS incoming QSL Bureau activity from 25 January to 15 April 2005.

Not a great amount of business to report on this occasion but, as I have said before, it is never possible to predict how many items will arrive and from where they will come.

For the record small packets (less than 1 kg) came from ARABiH, ARI, BA4CH, BFRR, CARS, CT1ELF, EDR, KARS, JARL x2, RX3RC, VR2, VU2XO, and YL2GN x 2. Also I was well occupied with heavier lots from ARRL, CRC, RAC, USKA, (2kg each), SRR, URE (4kg each) and DARC (9.8kg).

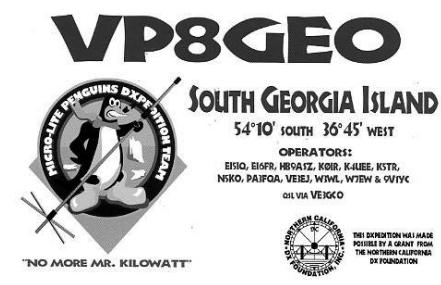
Cards from the following were noticed and thought worthy of mention:

A61AJ, A7/G0MKT, ET3TK, H7DX, HV0A, LG5LG, PZ5CQ, R73A, S21YT, SJ9WL, SU8BN, T77EB, T92000, XZ7A, YA/DL5NAV, YK1BA, 3DA0DF, 3W6HM, 3XY7C, and 9G5ZZ.

For IOTA chasers there was: AH2R, C98DC, CE0Y/7K1WLE, JH4WXV/6, P40HQ, R1ANC, R19KM, T88KJ, T88MC, UA0QMU/0, UE6AAA, VK9LT, VK9XW, VP8GEO, VQ9LA, XF1K, XX9C, ZK1AKX, 3W6HM, 4V200YH, 4W2A, 5K0Z, and 8J1RF (via AO40).

Congratulations to all recipients. Until my next report, all best wishes and lots of good DX in the meantime.

Michael McNamara, EI2CL



John EI3BF being presented with the Pat Conway Cup by Sean EI4GK



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